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THE BRIDE OF PARIS:

—OR,—

THE ROLL OF THE DRUM.

A Romance of the Revolution, the Reign of Terror, and the Days of Napoleon the Great.

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[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER XI.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Many months have elapsed. The revolution, so great and glorious in its inception, has changed its character. Men of blood are in power, and the tyranny of terror rules the land. The king and queen are no more—the nobility are in exile—the best friends of liberty have fallen on the scaffold. The spies of the Terrorists are everywhere. It is death to breathe a word against the revolutionary tribunals—Robespierre and his red-handed associates are masters of France.

Come with us now into the interior of a barber's shop in a street in Paris. Two persons are seated together, one of them an old man, the other a young girl. We have met them before. The old man is Gervase Richmond, a servant in the De Preville family, the same who admitted Armand to the hotel after the fall of the Bastille; and the young girl is no other than Julie. They were engaged in earnest conversation.

"And there seems no end to this reign of bloodshed and terror!" said Julie.

"Hush!" said Gervase, looking anxiously around. "There are spies everywhere—the very walls have ears."

"You think your information respecting my—I can hardly utter the word—my husband, Gerard Lorraine, is correct?"

"He has certainly succeeded in escaping from France, as I should have done could I have effected my purpose. Lorraine went into the revolution in good faith, but, disgusted with the ferocity of the fanatics into whose hands its guidance fell, he was rash in expressing his opinion. Then he became 'suspected,' as these monsters term it. To be suspected is to be doomed. Luckier than many others, he has fled, changed to a bitter hater of the republic, and vowing vengeance on the Terrorists."

"But you, my old friend," said Julie—"you, whose years require repose—you should not be involved in these exciting scenes. Yet, for my sake, what toils you have undergone! When the convent was broken up and we were driven into the street, denounced and suspected, Providence threw me in your path. You gave me a shelter, and more—you have permitted me to pass as your wife. You have resumed your old trade of a barber—you mix with these madmen. You mount guard like a young man—you attend their clubs—you are killing yourself with the work you have voluntarily assumed."

"Ah! Miss Julie—you amply repay me. You keep the old man's house in order—you economize my earnings—your needle contributes to our support. You are no burden, but a blessing. You have been to me more like a child than my son Paul, the saddler, who neglects me and shows me but little affection. And God has given me strength to go through what I have undertaken. The excitement of the times has taken ten years from my shoulders. But I can't prate any longer. Hand me my uniform."

"Are you going to the section?"

"Yes—I am on the guard."

"Dear Gervase," said Julie, "I am so terrified whenever you are out of my sight."

"That's the trouble. You should keep up a good heart, Julie. If honest people were only to stand firm in these times, they would be the strongest, for they are certainly the most numerous. But they run away and hide themselves, and so the ruffians get the upper hand of us."

"And you expose your life constantly?"

"Less than you think," answered old Gervase. "They are more stupid than wicked even—if such a thing is possible. A barber and a patriot, I have all their heads under my thumb. I take the fiercest of them by the nose, and throw dust in their eyes while I'm powdering their hair. Thanks to my patriotic jargon, I pass for one of the hottest of the Terrorists, and am in high favor with every Aristides of the Faubourg St. Antoine. Without their suspecting it, I have done many a good action, and protected many an honest man, who, but for me, would have laid his head on the block."

"You keep yourself informed of whatever is going forward, good Gervase?"

"Of course."

"Well, have you heard any news of the De Previlles?"

"They are in exile. The duchess is dead—the marquis, I believe, in Germany."

"And the chevalier Armand?"

Gervase turned away his head.

"You appear agitated, my old friend," said Julie. "You have some secret that you are hiding from me."

"I?" exclaimed Gervase, uneasily.

"Yes; this very night I heard you come down stairs very cautiously into the shop, and then I heard you talking in a low voice with somebody. Are we threatened with any new danger?"

"No, no," answered Gervase, hurriedly. "Certainly not."

"Gervase, you know me well enough to confide in me," said Julie, with a dissatisfied air.

"You shall know all in good time," said Gervase. "But hark! the clock is striking. I must repair to my post."

And glad, on this pretext, to avoid further questioning, old Gervase put on his three-cornered hat with an ostentatiously huge tricolored cockade, caught up his musket and hurried out into the street.

From the reverie into which she sank after the departure of her protector, Julie was startled by the opening and closing of the street door. A man had entered, and rushing up to Julie, exclaimed, in accents of terror:

"Whoever you are—save me! Give me shelter! I am hunted like a dog!"

"Good Heavens!" cried Julie, gazing on the face of the fugitive. "That face—that voice! I cannot be mistaken. It is the Marquis De Preville."

"Julie!" cried the marquis, recoiling. "Eternal justice, thou art satisfied! Well, no matter," he added, gloomily. "It is vain to struggle against destiny. Let Providence work out its will. Denounce me! give me up!"

With these words he sank into a chair, and rested his arm on the table.

"Give you up!" cried Julie. "I was not taught to return injury for injury. Where are your pursuers?"

"In the faubourg," replied the marquis.

"Our house stands at the corner," said Julie. "The moment you turned it, they lost sight of you."

"Yes, for a moment—but they will search all the houses in the street."

"Perhaps—but go into this side-room," said Julie, hurriedly. She opened a door, and pointed to the place of shelter. The marquis paused a moment on the threshold.

"Hark!" said he, with an expression of alarm. "I hear their drum! They are approaching!"

Julie listened. In fact the beat of the drum was distinctly heard, growing louder every moment.

"This agony is more cruel than death!" said the marquis, wiping the drops of perspiration from his brow. "I have not a drop of blood in my veins. Are they coming!"

"Alas! yes," replied Julie.

"And no means to defend myself."

"This chamber," said Julie, "has another door on the square. If they come in, make your escape that way."

The marquis bowed his head in token of assent, and closed the door.

"His death," thought Julie, "will at least be deferred, and perhaps—Heaven aiding—But how to give him time to escape." She seated herself and took up her sewing. "O, give me courage, Heaven!" was her inward prayer. "Why have I not the coolness of Gervase? My emotions will certainly betray me."

Meanwhile the drum continued to approach. The marquis opened the chamber door, pale with terror, and whispered:

"The street door is locked!"

"Ah!" said Julie, with a shudder, "I had forgotten. Gervase has the key. Commend your soul to God—and pray for me, too. It is all over with us: here are the soldiers."

The marquis had just time to hide himself, when Julie saw the bayonets and chapeaux of the patrol above the window curtains as they marched past. A moment afterwards, and the butts of their muskets crashed on the pavement, as they halted, and ordered arms. An officer and two men came into the shop.

"We'll begin with this house," said the officer.

One of the soldiers approached Julie, who stood before the door of the room in which the marquis was concealed, while the other went to the opposite door, which opened on a staircase leading down into the cellar. At this moment Gervase entered.

"What are you doing here?" cried he. "This is my house and I'll answer for it. You don't think I'd harbor an enemy of the nation? My wife will show you all over it, if you wish."

"There's no occasion," said the officer. "I'll place two sentinels at the corner of the street, and then we'll continue our search. The fugitive cannot escape us. March!"

The officer and his two men, with Gervase, then left the shop, and a moment afterwards Julie heard the detail of the sentinels, and then the words of command:

"Attention! Shoulder—arms! By the right flank—right face—march!"

The muskets rang, the drums beat, and the patrol moved on. When the sounds had died away in the distance, Julie opened the door of the little room, and the marquis came out.

"We are safe for the present, sir," said she.

"Let us take breath," said the marquis, dropping into an arm-chair. "I'm nearly exhausted."

"How is it, sir," asked Julie, "that you are in France? We thought you had emigrated."

"I took refuge in Switzerland. But I was penniless—remittances failed to reach me—I couldn't starve—and I resolved on the desperate step of re-visiting Paris. I instantly wrote to Derneval, our lawyer and steward—"

"What imprudence!"

"To ask a payment on account of the considerable sums he has collected in our name. The scoundrel wrote me that he was very sorry, but that he was now indebted to the nation and not to me."

"Ah! marquis," said Julie. "That man is on the committee of search."

"That accounts for the fact that a quarter of an hour after I received his answer, the ruffians were at my door. I made my escape by the chimney, and so over the roofs of the houses. Had I not fallen into your hands, Julie, I should have perished. But I suppose I can trust old Gervase, whose voice I recognized speaking to the commander of the patrol."

"He is true as steel."

"He has protected you, at least."

"He is my husband," said Julie, lowering her eyes, and blushing at the falsehood she felt obliged to tell, for she knew not how far she could trust the marquis. "Hark!" she added, "I hear his voice in the street."

The marquis went to the window with Julie.

"He is not alone!" exclaimed the marquis. "Who is that with him?"

"A neighbor of ours," answered Julie. "Simon Lerou, the cobbler at the corner, who has just been made a municipal officer. He has assumed a Roman name, like most of the Jacobins, and now styles himself Citizen Brutus. But he's a stupid fellow. Still, you had better go back to your hiding place till he is gone."

"I think so too," replied the marquis, as he retired. "In times like these, we cannot be too careful."

Gervase now came in, accompanied by a short, vulgar looking man, with an ominous cast in his eye, who wore an enormous tricolored sash knotted round his waist. He strutted pompously into the shop and dropped himself into a chair, while Gervase laid aside his musket and accoutrements.

"Citizen Brutus has come to have his hair dressed, my dear," said Gervase. "Hand me a clean towel."

Julie passed Gervase the towel, and he tied it round the neck of his customer.

"Ah!" said he, as he plied his comb, "what a fine thing it is for a government to have able officers everywhere. If they want a magistrate, they have only to go into the next tinker's or cobbler's shop, and find the very man for the place."

"Just so," said the Brutus of the faubourg, jumping to his feet, and flourishing his arms in an oratorical fashion. "When the Roman people had need of a general, where did they go? Why, they went into the fields, and took him from the plough. And, by the way, speaking of Roman citizens—there remains one painful sacrifice for me to make on the altar of my country."

"What is that?" asked Gervase, with the scissors in his hand.

"We have abolished all distinctions—all ornaments, haven't we? We go for republican simplicity, don't we?"

"Of course," assented Gervase.

"Well, then," continued Brutus, "I, who have declaimed against aristocratical distinctions, have yet all along clung to one myself."

"Hear! hear!" cried Gervase.

"Yes, here!" said Citizen Brutus, and putting his hand to the back of his head, he brought into view an enormous queue.

"You know, citizen," he said, with deep pathos, "with what tender solicitude I have trained this frivolous ornament. I cherished it like a Chinese. But it must go—my country demands it. Quick! Cut it off!"

Gervase, laughing behind his back, severed the queue with one snap of his scissors. Citizen Brutus took the amputated ornament in his hand, and contemplated it with grave emotion. Then putting it carefully in his breast pocket, he said:

"I will ever cherish this memento of a patriot's devotion, and transmit it to my children as a priceless legacy."

He then sat down and submitted patiently to the operation of dressing his hair. After which, he announced that he must go to his friend's, Quintus Curtius the soap-boiler's factory, to hear the newspapers read. He had no sooner gone than a violent knocking was heard from the interior of the room in which the marquis was concealed. Julie was much embarrassed.

"Some one is knocking at the door on the square," said Gervase. "Go and open it, Julie."

"But you have the key," said Julie.

"Ah! I had forgotten," said Gervase.

He opened the door into the little room and started back in astonishment.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SUCCESSFUL STRATAGEM.

"The marquis!" exclaimed Gervase.

"None other," replied the marquis, taking the old man's hand. "But this is no time for greeting. The man who has been knocking at the door of yonder chamber is the man I most have reason to fear in the world just now—Derneval—I recognize his voice."

"Then," said Gervase, pointing to the street, "though I should be pleased to give you the shelter of my humble roof, my counsel is to fly."

"But," said Julie, "you forget the sentinels. They will suffer no one to leave the street. The cellar?"

"No," said Gervase, in a low tone, "I have too great a treasure there."

"You are powerless to save me, friends," said the marquis, gloomily. "Well, let not my presence endanger you longer—let me go."

"Never!" said Gervase, warmly. "Never will I desert you in the hour of need. Here, Julie, here is the key. Go and open the door and let Derneval in. Courage and presence of mind alone can save us now."

While Julie went to execute the orders of Gervase, the latter placed an arm-chair near the table, and seated the marquis in it. He then tied a large towel round his neck, and taking his soap and brush, proceeded to cover his whole face with lather with a reckless disregard of expense. While he was strapping his razor, Julie came back from her errand, followed by M. Godfrey Derneval. The worthy man of business and finance was now designated by the classic name of Seneca, a tribute to his worth and wisdom.

"Well," growled Derneval, "you've let me in at last. Is it your custom to keep patriots waiting at your door?"

"No, Citizen Seneca," replied Gervase, keeping between Derneval and the marquis, and occasionally renewing the whitewash on the latter's face. "I heard you, but I was busy with a customer, and my wife was out of the way. Besides, you might easily have gone round and come in by the shop door, which is always open to everybody."

"I took the nearest door," said Derneval. "I have just come from the Hotel de Preville, which is up for sale. And I came to carry you there."

"Impossible," answered Gervase. "I am detailed for guard duty. I shoulder the musket again at seven o'clock. Have you an eye on the hotel?" he asked, in a low tone.

"I'm looking for an investment," answered Derneval. "But I only buy to pull down."

The marquis, who had heard every word of this conversation, started involuntarily at this statement. The movement did not escape the quick eye of Derneval, who asked:

"What's the matter with the man?"

"O, nothing," said Gervase, carelessly. "You can speak out before him without fear. He is a citizen of the Batavian republic, who doesn't understand a word of French—a Goth of a Dutchman, who comes to sell his cheeses for our paper money."

"The blockhead!" said Derneval, with an air of sovereign contempt. "Well, it is said that the De Previlles hid money there before they fled, and as a member of the committee of search, I come, in the name of the nation, to require you to aid me in the execution of my functions, as cognizant of all the crooks and turns of the house."

"I do know something about it," said Gervase. "Hold still, my friend," he added, to the marquis, "I wont cut you. But, Citizen Seneca, we must share equally, like brothers."

"Fraternity—of course," said Derneval.

"And equality. But is there no risk in the affair? Suppose the De Previlles should come back?"

"Impossible," replied Derneval. "The penalty is death. In a few days there will not be a De Preville on the soil of France. The Chevalier de Preville—Armand—is somewhere in hiding—but he is sentenced, and we shall soon have his head."

Julie, on hearing this, found it difficult to conceal her emotions, but an anxious glance from Gervase enabled her to suppress them.

"However," added Derneval, "that's neither here nor there. You're busy now, and I wont keep you from your work. At half past nine this evening, I will call for you. But your shop will be shut."

"You can enter as you came, by the square," said Gervase.

"True. Give me the key."

"The key!" said Gervase, with manifest hesitation.

"Of course," answered Derneval. "What are you afraid of? A good patriot's house should be opened to his fellow-citizens at all hours."

"Of course," said Gervase. "What was I thinking of? Wife, give Citizen Seneca the key."

Julie reluctantly obeyed.

"Thank you," said Derneval. "I knew that Citizen Gervase was the cream of the section—and woe to any aristocrat that falls into his hands!"

The marquis started at this remark.

"Hold still, my friend," said Gervase, "or I shall cut you."

"To-night, then," said Derneval.

"At half past nine," answered Gervase, "I shall be ready."

"Well, thank Heaven! he's gone at last!" said Gervase, as he shut the shop door after Derneval. "I thought he'd never go."

"Armand!" cried Julie. "Armand! doomed to death!"

"Take courage," said Gervase. "He has friends who warned him in time."

"Who was devoted enough to save my brother?" asked the marquis.

"The man you just now mentally suspected," answered Gervase.

"I?"

"Yes—when Derneval called me a merciless man, you started under my hands. You thought me capable of betraying you. Happily there is one here who can exonerate me fully."

The marquis and Julie exchanged looks of anxiety and inquiry. Gervase went to the cellar-door and opening it, cried out:

"Come up, Armand, and fear nothing!"

"Armand here!" cried Julie; and she sank into a chair, and covered her face with her hands.

Armand de Preville entered at the summons. He glanced around him, and recognized the marquis. Though the elder had never loved the younger brother—though they had even crossed swords with each other—yet at this moment of mutual danger, their family dispersed, death perhaps already knocking at the door, the old feud was forgotten, for the time, and they rushed into each other's arms. Then Armand, disengaging himself, turned to Gervase:

"My friend," said he, "I owe to your hospitable shelter, life and the ability to thank you. Never, never, shall I be able to cancel the obligation you have laid me under."

At this moment, he recognized Julie, and with a wild cry, sprang towards her.

"Julie!" he cried; "you here!"

"Yes," replied Julie, "and like you, I owe life and shelter to this good man."

"Her husband," said the marquis.

"No, no!" said Gervase, shaking his head. "Youth and beauty, like Julie's, are not mated with gray hairs. I have assumed the character of her husband, only the better to protect her."

"Then you are not really married?" cried Armand, turning to Julie. "You are free—I may hope—"

"Hush! Armand!" said Julie. "Indulge no vain hopes. I have not deceived you. I am married."

"And your husband?"

"Ask me not of him. He is living."

The light of hope faded from the chevalier's eyes. But he mastered his emotions by a painful effort. Turning to Gervase, he gave him his hand and said:

"My friend and benefactor, if ever fortune smiles on me again, I shall never forget to whom I owe my life."

"Don't talk so," said Gervase, wiping his eyes. "I have only obeyed the dictates of my heart. But time presses and dangers still menace you."

"Yes," said Julie, "and your greatest danger is in Derneval. That man was born to be the sorrow of my life. I never see him without a shudder. I am constantly afraid that his suspicions will light on Gervase. He knows that I am married to another—and if he knew that my husband was still living, he would conceive suspicions based on my presence in this house. He is, body and soul, the slave of avarice. He has grown rich on the spoil of your family, and yet he craves for more."

"Is it true, my friends," asked Gervase, "that the Hotel de Preville contains a portion of your wealth?"

"A remnant," said the marquis. "A little gold and a few diamonds are concealed in my mother's chamber behind the second panel on the right."

"Good!" said Gervase. "I will go there and secure them before Mr. Godfrey Derneval gets his clutches on them. And since it is known to some villains that you two are lurking in Paris, you must leave the city immediately. Have you passports?"

"I," said Armand, "have that you gave me. But it will hardly pass examination."

"I have my servant's passport," said the marquis.

"So far so good," said Gervase. "But that is not all that's necessary. You must have the permit of a magistrate to leave the city. Give me your papers."

The two brothers placed their passports in his hands.

"I will take charge of them," continued Gervase, "and carry them at once to the district—to the municipality." He took Julie aside, and added in a low voice—"if I have time, for if they do not leave Paris to-night, to-morrow I cannot answer for their safety."

"What is that you're saying, Gervase?" asked the marquis.

"Nothing — nothing," answered Gervase. "Come, Julie, it is now half-past eight o'clock, and we can shut up the shop, without suspicion. Light the lamp and wait patiently till I return."

With these words Gervase hurried into the street. His friends listened anxiously and heard the challenge of the sentinel, and his cheerful reply. While Julie busied herself in fastening the windows and putting up the inside shutters, the two brothers conversed together.

"What evil times we live in!" said the marquis. "Now, brother, you see to what your favorite ideas of change have led."

"Ah," replied Armand, warmly, "do not confound liberty with the excesses committed in her name. Liberty, as we understand it, as Lafayette understands it, is the friend of order and of law, and protects the rights of all. Liberty would have laws and institutions, but no scaffolds."

"Alas!" said the marquis. "What avail your courage and the wisdom of your sentiments? You are denounced and reduced to hide like me, after having fought for these Terrorists."

"No, brother," answered the chevalier; "not for them, but for France—and believe me, a man never regrets what he does for his country. I have done little good—but I have prevented much evil, and if I had my career to choose again, I should pursue the same path. But hark! what cry is that in the street?"

The brothers listened, and heard distinctly the cry of a newsman.

"Here's the full particulars! Another great conspiracy discovered by the Committee of Public Safety."

"More victims!" said Armand, sadly.

"The men," said the marquis, "who did not respect the virtues of Malesherbes, the talents of Lavoisier, the youth of Barnave, the royalty of Louis, and the beauty of Marie Antoinette, will not recoil before another crime."

"Honest men," said Armand, "will grow weary of showing courage only in suffering martyrdom. France will arise stronger and more united, for misfortune brings all ranks, all opinions together. We ourselves, brother, of old divided, are now reunited, and at least we can die together."

"You are right," said the marquis, throwing his arms about the chevalier, in a transport of feeling.

At this moment, Julie was just closing the front door, when our friend Citizen Brutus rushed into the shop, and surprised the brothers.

"Bravo! citizens!" he exclaimed. "The fraternal salute. I like to see it. Hurrah for the republic! Don't mind me—I'm one of 'em."

"We are lost!" whispered the marquis to his brother.

"How are things going on, citizen?" asked Armand, coolly.

"Famously—famously," replied the cobbler. "This is the fourteenth time we've saved the country this month, and it's only the seventeenth."

While this conversation was going on, Julie had closed the shop door, and was now quietly seated at her needlework.

"Don't be alarmed," whispered Armand, to his brother, "this fellow is simply an egregious ass."

"You heard the newsman, citizens, didn't you?" asked Brutus.

"Yes," replied Armand.

"I have all the particulars here," said Brutus, producing a paper from his pocket. "The man who serves the nation in an official capacity is bound to keep himself and others well posted up. My son, Lucius Junius Brutus Quintus Curtius Cicero, a boy of ten, keeps me informed of all the conspiracies going. Here's one they've discovered to-day. I don't know where they find 'em, but one is sure to turn up every morning. Perhaps you'd like to look at this one?"

"Thank you," said Armand, taking the paper. "Shall I read it aloud?"

"If you please, citizen," answered Brutus. "My eyes are rather bad."

Armand read as follows, with a loud, unshaken voice:

"Proclamation of the Committee of Safety, outlawing the individuals hereinafter named, as attainted and convicted of having conspired to overthrow the republic."

"Their names! their names!" shouted Brutus.

"The ex-duke of Montrose," pursued Armand, "the ex-marquis Eugene de Preville."

"There are more," said Brutus, impatiently.

"The ex-chevalier Armand de Preville."

At this moment Gervase returned.

"What are you three laying your heads together about?" said he.

"We are reading the list of the traitors denounced by the committee," said Brutus.

While Armand continued the reading, which absorbed the attention of his companions, Gervase approached Julie, and they conversed together in a low tone.

"What news?" asked Julie.

"Bad," replied Gervase. "The committee suspects that the two brothers are in Paris—spies have been sent to the coach offices and to the barriers, and the municipal officers will serve no passports except to parties appearing in person. This is a regulation they have adopted this evening."

"Was Brutus at the meeting?" asked Julie, thoughtfully.

"No," replied Gervase.

"Perhaps he doesn't know of it."

"You are right," answered Gervase, and he approached the brothers.

"Give me the list, citizen," said Brutus. "There are some people there, that I have spotted—and they wont escape me, I can tell you."

"Nonsense!" said Gervase, pushing between them. "With gold anything can be accomplished." Here he privately slipped a purse into the hand of each of the brothers. "And these rascals have it," he added.

"You're mistaken," said Citizen Brutus. "It's the money that will be their ruin. The de Previlles—for instance—I am ordered to arrest them, and I'll do it this very evening."

"How so?" asked Armand, laughing.

"Do you know where they are?" asked Gervase.

"I've an idea," said Brutus, mysteriously. "Hear me, friends. It was reported this morning that they had heaps of money—millions—hid in the walls of their hotel. Thinks I to myself—if they're in Paris—they'll go there to bag their tin."

"Of course," said Armand. "You were right there."

"Very good," continued Citizen Brutus. "So I have sent two spies to watch the hotel, and if they or either of them show their noses, they'll be pounced upon and sent to the stone jug. Some wit there, eh! Don't you think so?"

"Perhaps," answered Armand; "but it strikes me you made a blunder."

"A blunder, citizen?" exclaimed Brutus. "To seize the traitors!"

"Of course," answered Armand, coolly. "It would have been much better to seize their money."

"He's right there," whispered Brutus to Gervase. "That's an idea. But how the deuce shall we compass it?"

"I'll tell you," whispered Gervase, drawing him aside. "I know the hotel—and if you'll help me, in the name of the nation—"

"Of course," said Brutus, eagerly. "Let's be off this very minute."

"Stop," whispered Gervase, "we must first get rid of these two, because they'd want to share—in the name of the nation, of course—and of Citizen Derneval who will soon come here with the same object in view."

"The rascal!" muttered Brutus. "I know him—it will be hard to put *him* off the scent."

"I'll look out for him," said Gervase; "but you must take care of these two."

"How shall I do it?" asked Brutus, with a stupid look.

"I'll show you," replied Gervase, in a whisper. Then he added in a loud voice. "When the country is in danger, as we have seen it is by the papers, it behooves all good citizens to repair to their posts."

"Yes, every man to his post," echoed Brutus.

"And here," continued Gervase, "is my wife's uncle, Citizen Thomas, and my cousin, Citizen Marin, who are on leave of absence from the army, and want to get out of Paris to-night."

"Well, why don't they go?" asked Brutus.

"You must sign a permit for them as a municipal officer."

"I can't do it," answered Brutus, sturdily.

This unexpected reply produced general consternation among his hearers.

"And why not?" asked Gervase, "when I am security for them."

"I can't help that," said Brutus.

"Do you refuse to sign?" asked Gervase.

"I have an invulnerable reason," said Brutus.

"What is it?" asked Gervase.

"I can't write," whispered Brutus to Gervase. Then he added aloud, "all I can do for these good citizens is to take them by the arm and carry them wherever they wish to go."

"Good!" said Gervase, relieved from his apprehensions. "They want to leave the city by the National Diligence which starts this evening."

"The office is only just round the corner," said Brutus.

"You'll answer for them?" said Gervase.

"I wont leave 'em till the diligence starts," said Brutus. "And then I'll come back for you."

"You'll find me here," said Gervase.

Thereupon the worthy Citizen Brutus offered an arm to each of the brothers, and marched with them to the door. On the threshold the two brothers turned back and bade adieu to their benefactors in a farewell glance—but it spoke volumes.

"God be praised for their deliverance!" said Julie, as the door closed.

"Amen!" responded Gervase. "And now I am ready to go with Derneval to the Hotel de Preville. I left some money there for him—and in a secure place a sufficient sum to gratify the rapacity of Brutus. These two men satisfied, I have yet another duty to perform—to secure the flight of the old Count de Clarmont, the patron of my son Paul."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE COUNT AND THE SADDLER.

The Count de Claremont, whom we saw for a moment at Versailles, whither he went to offer his sword to his king, had no opportunity for displaying his valor. Following the royal family to Paris, he had the agony of witnessing the rise of the Terrorists and the fall of the king and queen, without the power to aid them. He himself escaped the general proscription. In the first place he had been a gallant soldier of France, and his name was associated with many of her victorious battles: then, too, he had ever been the friend of the poor, and was known to, and beloved by many members of the lower classes, who, like Gervase, were devotedly attached to him. Shutting himself up in an old ruinous house, whence he rarely stirred abroad, his existence almost was unknown or unnoticed.

But Gervase knew very well that the madness of the hour would induce such thorough searches, that the ferocity of the hour would demand so universal a sacrifice, that it was unsafe for the count to remain longer in the city. He had accordingly procured a passport for him, and after having got rid of Derneval and Brutus, repaired to the count's lodgings to urge his immediate flight.

His attachment to the count dated from the latter's generosity to his son Paul, a saddler by trade, who had squandered all the savings of his old father. But of a sudden, a change came over the young man, he reformed his evil habits, and promised to lead an industrious and regular life. For his re-establishment, however, money was necessary. Gervase applied to the de Previlles. But they had already advanced money, and they had no faith in Paul's reformation. The almost distracted father then appealed to the Count de Claremont. The count was touched by the story, and advanced a large sum of money—not as a loan, but a gift. Paul was enabled to set up for himself in business and to marry. Both father and son were profuse in expressions of gratitude—and now the opportunity had arrived when the former was enabled to prove his sincerity.

On his way to the count's, Gervase passed an immense multitude of people moving in procession with drums, torches and banners, making the narrow streets ring with the thrilling notes of the Marseillaise. When he entered the count's apartments he found him much alarmed at this public demonstration, of which he anxiously inquired the cause.

"Nothing, count," replied Gervase.

"What poor wretches' lives are they thirsting for now?" asked the count.

"Nobody's, sir," replied Gervase. "It was only their manner of testifying their joy. It was the sections marching to felicitate the districts on their having saved the country—the commune going to congratulate the nation on saving the country. And so they go. They pass their lives in saving the country and congratulating each other on it—except when, in a less amiable humor, they denounce each other, and cut each other's throats. But here is a letter for you, sir, that came to my care."

The count took the letter.

"I recognize the handwriting," said he. "It is from an old friend of mine—Baron de Bracy." Then hastily opening it—he read aloud:

"My dear Friend,—I have reliable news from unhappy Paris—and as you live in such utter retirement, it may be news to you though you live upon the spot. The party which oppresses France has sworn to make an end of the nobility. It has prepared its plans in secret, and will not hesitate to strike the blow. Lose no time in crossing the frontier. Delay in this crisis, is not danger alone—but death.

"Your devoted friend, De Bracy."

"It is but too true," said Gervase, "nothing short of the heads of all the nobility will satisfy these monsters."

"Then you counsel me to fly?" asked the count.

"Without a doubt."

"For a long time," replied the count, "I have resisted a secret impulse to do so. You know that at the outset, I condemned the emigration of the nobility. I always thought that a soldier should never desert his standard, and my standard was my country. I saw the standard-bearer, the king—fall—still I refused to emigrate. The queen went next—one after another, the noblest heads were laid upon the block. Still I hoped for some new turn of fortune—for the restoration of order and peace."

"There is no longer room for hope," said Gervase.

"I fear not," said the count.

"And you have made up your mind to use the passport I have furnished you and escape?"

"I have," said the count. "Your son Paul has bought me a good horse, which is in the stable; for though I might perform the journey on foot, still I am old, and my strength might fail me."

"I am glad Paul has not forgotten his obligations to you."

"The little assistance I rendered him was cheerfully given," said the count, "and you have repaid me by saving my life."

"I have only done my duty, sir," said Gervase.

"Noble man," said the count, shaking his hand warmly. "Heaven will reward you for your kindness to the unfortunate. I trust we shall meet again, when happier days have come. I am sorry to leave you—and in such a place as Paris is at present."

"The reign of terror cannot last forever," said Gervase; "and as an exaggerated patriot, I think I incur little danger. So long as there are unfortunates to succor, I cannot make up my mind to leave the scene of danger. But, tell me, count, is there anything further I can do for you?"

"Nothing more. Yet stay—do you know one Rochefort?"

"Yes—very well."

"He is a true friend of mine. He is about starting for the army of the frontier on a confidential mission. I know not whether he leaves to-night. But it will do no harm to apprise him that in an hour hence, I shall be on the northern road."

"I will do so, count," replied Gervase. "And now, with the best wishes for your success, I will bid you farewell."

"Farewell!" said the count, warmly grasping his hand. "And may Heaven bless and reward you!"

Gervase retired, and the count went into an inner room to make his preparations for his departure. After some time Paul Richmond, the son of old Gervase, who had been furnished with a pass-key to the house, made his appearance, carrying a saddle furnished with holster pipes, which he had been directed to bring with him. This he laid upon a table, and then sat down beside it.

Paul the saddler did not have a prepossessing countenance. His complexion was sallow—his hair short and wiry, and his restless eyes were deep sunken in their sockets. There was a lowering and sinister expression about his brows and mouth, which invested them with a repellant aspect.

"I'm glad the count's going off," he muttered to himself; "there'll be one spy the less upon my life. Because he set me up in business—he fancies that he has a right to put all sorts of questions to me. What's the matter with you, Paul? what makes you look so gloomy and haggard?" It's the same thing with all of them—wife—mother—father. Yet, though they pry and probe, they haven't discovered my secret. They don't know that every coin I earn is wasted on the mad passion of my life. This job—this saddle—paid for in advance—where is the money? Gone! gone at the gaming table. They think me reformed. Folly! who ever heard of a reformed gambler? A boy, I played for money. A youth, I staked on the cards. My father's earnings went that way. Three quarters of what the count gave me went that way. And now, with a wife clamorous for bread; with notes due to the usurer's to-morrow; I must still play on, dreaming that one successful stroke of fortune will make me a rich man. The sight of gold—the thought of gold maddens me. But I shall never see it more—I have staked my last sous—my wife is starving, and nothing is left me, but the pistol or the river."

At this moment the count entered. The saddler rose and saluted him respectfully.

"Ah," said the count. "I thank you for your zeal. You have brought the saddle, I see?"

"Yes, sir."

"The rest of the horse furniture is in the stable?"

"It is, sir."

"Are there pistols in the holsters?"

"Yes, sir. Three buckshot and a ball in each."

"'Tis well. You wondered, I suppose, that I had the saddle brought up here?"

"It did seem rather odd, sir," replied Paul.

"Well—I have no secrets from you, Paul. You left an opening in the saddle flaps?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you brought needles and thread with you?"

"I did, sir."

"Good. Now my plan is this. I have a large sum in my possession. Gold and diamonds, chiefly the latter—worth three hundred thousand francs!"

"Worth three hundred thousand francs!" echoed the saddler.

"Yes—long ago—foreseeing these unhappy troubles, I converted the remnants of my property into this portable shape. You and your father are the only persons in the world to whom I would confide this secret. Now, I'm going to hide away my treasure, and then you must sew up the saddle-flaps."

With these words, the count produced from his pockets various small packages, and proceeded to stow away their glittering contents in the flaps of the saddle, distributing them as evenly as possible. Paul watched him with avid eyes, a thousand evil thoughts chasing each other through his brain, as he looked on.

"Now," said the count, at length, "my task is ended—and yours begins."

Mechanically the saddler produced his implements, and set to work; but his hands trembled as he passed the needle through the leather and drew the thread. His brain was in a whirl—a thousand wild thoughts chased each other through his mind. Here was a fortune beneath his very hands—and yet it belonged to another. At one moment he thought he would spring up, rush upon the count and strangle him, and he would have done so, had he not been as cowardly as he was guilty. He lingered over his task, prolonging it in the hope that some tangible scheme for getting possession of the coveted treasure would present itself to his brain. The count sat beside him, watching him at his work, and there must have been something in his expression which struck unfavorably even the guiltless soul of his benefactor; for when at last the saddler's task was reluctantly completed, and he asked if he should not take the saddle to the stable, the count replied coldly in the negative.

"I shall have no further occasion for your services, Paul," said he.

"But you had better let me saddle your horse for you, sir."

"I am an old trooper," said the count, "and have not forgotten what I learned when a cadet. Besides, I shall have to shift for myself when I am once out of Paris, and I cannot begin too soon."

"Well, I wish you good fortune, sir," muttered the saddler.

"Thank you, Paul, I know you do," replied the count. "You are a good fellow. Here take this trifle—and give part of it to your wife to remember me by."

"No, no, sir," said Paul, repelling the proffered gift of money. "I wouldn't take a sou from you. You have paid me for my work generously; to say nothing of your former kindness to me. Farewell, sir."

"Farewell, then, Paul. Remember me to your good father and your wife. I wronged this poor fellow," thought the count, when the saddler had left him. "He is rough and unpolished, but honest. I know by sad experience that a smooth exterior does not always cover a true heart. Well—well, I'll just take a brief nap, for I am almost worn out—and then start."

He threw himself on his couch, wrapped in a cloak, and almost instantly fell into a deep sleep. At the expiration of an hour he awoke, lighted a dark lantern, and taking up a small portmanteau, cautiously descended to the stable. It still wanted some hours of morning. Everything was hushed in the streets, except the footfalls of the sentinels on duty, and the lamps were burning dimly.

The count found his horse lying down in the stall.

"Get up, my good fellow," said the soldier. "Your sleep like mine, must be broken. We have many a weary mile before us, and we must begin our journey betimes."

The count's voice and the glare of the lantern startled the horse, and he sprang up from his straw and shook himself. The count led him out, and proceeded to rub him down. He felt the satisfaction of an old trooper, as his hand passed over the firm muscles and well-knit limbs of the hardy animal, and the brisk movements of the horse as he stepped from side to side, satisfied him that he should be well mounted.

"Paul is no bad judge of horse flesh," he thought.

When the grooming of the horse was completed, the count bridled him, placed the saddle on his back, and strapped the portmanteau to the crupper. He next examined his trappings carefully, looked to the buckles of the headstall and stirrup leathers, and made sure that all was right. After lifting every foot in turn and ascertaining that the shoes were in good order, he extinguished the light, led his horse into the courtyard, and unlocking and opening the gateway that led into the street, prepared to mount. But at that moment a noise was heard in the street. The count paused to listen, with his foot in the stirrup and his hand on the mane. His experienced ear distinguished the regular tramp of a body of soldiers. In an instant he was in the saddle and wheeled his horse to the gateway. But he was too late. A file of armed men barred the passage, and a municipal officer, with a paper in his hand, flanked by a torch bearer, advanced, and said in a stern voice:

"In the name of the law I arrest thee, Eustace, ex-count de Claremont."

"This must be some mistake, my friend," said the count, gently.

"No mistake whatever," replied the officer. "You must surrender yourself. You perceive it useless to resist."

"O, I don't think of it," said the count. "But my dear sir, you are giving yourself unnecessary trouble; I have done nothing to cause my arrest. I was about leaving town, it is true, but I have a passport."

"All passports are revoked. Come, sir, dismount," said the officer.

"Certainly," replied the count, and he bent over his horse's neck, as if to obey the order. But he had no such intention. His eye, all the time, had been fixed upon the soldiers. He saw that his apparent submission had put them off their guard. They were standing at ease and leaning carelessly on their muskets. Quick as thought, the count sat erect in his saddle, and driving both spurs into the flanks of his fiery horse, dashed through the passage-way at full speed. The furious charge overthrew two of the republican soldiers, and the next instant the horse's hoofs were dashing the fire from the pavement in the street.

"Follow!" roared the municipal officer, furiously. "Follow and fire! If the aristocrat escapes, you shall all go to the guillotine."

The soldiers rushed into the street. The whole affair occupied but a few seconds. An instant more and the count would turn the corner. The blaze of a dozen muskets lighted up the narrow street, and the crash of their detonation rattled the window panes. The horse, who had never been broken to stand fire, reared bolt upright in the air, wavered for a moment, and then fell over backward with a crash. When the count, stunned by his fall, recovered his senses, he was in the hands of the guard.

"Take this beast back to the stable," said the officer, to one of the soldiers, as the horse rose to his feet.

"And the ex-count?" asked the sergeant in command of the squad.

"To the prison of the Luxembourg!" replied the officer. "At daylight he will have a chance to see the Revolutionary Tribunal in session. On to the Luxembourg!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ANECDOTE OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

The London correspondent of the British Advertiser tells the following anecdote of the queen: A rather remarkable picture is now being exhibited in Piccadilly, the production, I believe, of a Mr. Bartlett, curiously enough, a Quaker. It is a representation of the visit of the queen and royal family to the wounded Crimean soldiers at the Brompton hospital. It is said that this picture was taken at a rather curious moment. The queen was standing, with tears in her eyes, talking to a poor fellow who had got sadly shattered in battle. Prince Albert stood impassive and unmoved. The royal mistress, who is a woman, was mortified by his vacant and unfeeling look, and petulantly said to him, her voice still quivering with sympathy, "Do say something to the man, and not stand staring in that way."

The largest heart is that which only one can rest upon or impress; the purest is that which dares to call itself impure; the kindest is that which shrinks rather at its own inhumanity than at another's.—*Lander.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

HOPELESS LOVE.

BY JOHN WISE.

Howl, ye bleak winds, along the barren plai
With hollow murmurs fill the dusky air!
Let thunders roll, let midnight darkness rei
The dreary scenes of my soul's despair.

For, O I love! but heedless of my pain,
The maid whose beauty all my soul inspir
Rejects my passion with a cold disdain,
Dumps my fond hopes, and chills my war

O, smile no more, sweet solitude, where oft
I sought my Mira in the checkered shade
Where listening to her voice—her voice so s
My yielding soul was Mira's captive made

Thou desert forest! witness to my love;
To thee alone in plaintive strains I dare
Tell my fond passion, whilst I lonely rove,
Without one ray of hope my steps to cheer

Thou desert forest! in thy twilight shade
O let me wander far from human sight,
Where no ray cumbrous the thick gloom pe
Nor the pale moon gleams through with s

Each scene delighted when my Mira smiled.
Woods, hills and vales—all nature looked
Sweet hope, delusive! my heart beguiled,
And hoary winter laughed like youthful

On my fond bosom then would Mira lean;
I told my love—I told my ardent flame—
But, ah, how changed from that enchanting
A favored rival now usurps my claim.

Now nought but sadness, sorrow and despai
Attend my steps—attend where'er I go;
All things that smiled, now glowing appear s
The trees wave mournful—and the zephyrs

And, hark! from yonder solitary spray
The moaning turtle's plaintive notes resou
Thy plaintive notes I love—pursue thy lay—
It suits my sorrow, and it soothes my woe.

How oft, when blessed with hopes of Mira's
Hath fancy raised gay scenes of future joy
Fancy, with rapture, would unbounded rove
O'er every charm, and all my thought en

But now, ideal scenes of bliss no more
Engage my heart, and all my thoughts ecs
Mira is lost! whilst I the loss deplore;
A gloomy train of sorrows clouds my soul

Though hopeless love, unpitied—though de
With lasting anguish fill my tortured bre
Where Mira dwells, let no intruding care,
No heart-corroding grief her peace molest

[Written for The Flag of our Union

MARK HARDIN

A BACKWOODS SKETCH.

BY MRS. MARY MAYNARD

Reader, did you ever live in th
woods?" and did you ever attend
woods ball?" Because, if you did not
form no idea of how folks enjoy su
there, Now I have; and I can assur
for having a pleasant time, making th
the "fleet footed hours," and finding
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perienced in a given time, we, "child
wilderness," are far before you who
cities."

True, it might not suit your ideas
ness, for we cannot always command
cessaries as quadrille bands and gas
even the minor luxuries of ice creams,
white kid gloves and ditto satin slipp
for all that, we can and do enjoy ours
our otherwise dull winters are not a li
ened by the annual festivals that ar
most of the backwoods settlements—or
where there are young people enough
moderate distance to make parties plea
I am not going to tell you the precis
of my present story; suffice it that it
then place of residence—that it was a
nearer to the setting sun than you have
ever been, and most certainly deserved
of a "backwoods settlement," for th
ness was all around us—and though
ered that we had quite a number of
strangers would probably have looke
almost hermits.

But of this place and its character
appear in my story; and I must no
you that it was winter, somewhere
middle of December, and our whole
was busied in preparations for the
year's ball, the time for which was
approaching.

There were several unusual features
this ball, which made it more than
interesting, and caused no small
speculating among the young folks.
Squire F—— volunteered the use of
unfinished barn for the accommodatio
revellers—a most unusual proceedin,
squire, who had all his life set his fa
music and dancing; but every one re
die. The old fellow had lost his wife
past year, and all the settlement knew
was laying strong siege to the heart
little widow Thomson, who loved da
ter than anything else in the world
was admiration. Now the squire k
would be a ball, and he also knew th
Thomson would be there, and he re
lated to impress her with an increas
his importance, if he succeeded in
hence the offer of the barn, which was
amly accepted.

Another interesting circumstance w
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gentleman—a Mr. Philander Simps
when it became known that he was a
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event, at any cost.

At home, in New York, Mr. Simpl
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die of repletion, so warmly was he we
the hospitable tables of the music-lo
mania. The warmest seat at the fi
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prettiest girl of the party were always
on the happy little fiddler; and, in
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HOPELESS LOVE.

BY JOHN WIRT.

Howl, ye bleak winds, along the barren plain
With hollow murmure fill the dusky air!
Let thunders roll, let midnight darkness reign,
The dreary solace of my soul's despair.

For, O I love! but heedless of my pain,
The maid whose beauty all my soul inspires,
Rejects my passion with a cold disdain,
Damps my fond hopes, and chills my warm desires.

O, smile no more, sweet solitude, where oft
I sought my Mira in the checkered shade;
Where listening to her voice—her voice so soft—
My yielding soul was Mira's captive made.

Thou desert forest! witness to my love;
To thee alone in plaintive strains I dare
Tell my fond passion, whilst I lonely rove,
Without one ray of hope my steps to cheer.

Thou desert forest! in thy twilight shade
O let me wander far from human sight,
Where no gay sunbeams the thick gloom pervade,
Nor the pale moon gleams through with silver light.

Each scene delighted when my Mira smiled,
Woods, hills and vales—all nature looked more gay;
Sweet hope, delusive! my heart beguiled,
And hoary winter laughed like youthful May.

Oh my fond bosom then would Mira lean;
I told my love—I told my ardent flame—
But, ah, how changed from that enchanting scene!
A favored rival now usurps my claim.

Now nought but sadness, sorrow and despair
Attend my steps—attend where'er I go;
All things that smiled, now gloomy aspect wear,
The trees wave mournful—and the rivlets flow:

And, hark! from yonder solitary spray
The moaning turtle's plaintive notes resound;
Thy plaintive notes I love—pursue thy lay—
It suits my sorrow, and it soothes my wound.

How oft, when blessed with hopes of Mira's love,
Hath fancy raised gay scenes of future joy!
Fancy, with rapture, would unbounded rove
O'er every charm, and all my thought employ.

But now, ideal scenes of bliss no more
Engage my heart, and all my thoughts control;
Mira is lost! whilst I the loss deplore;
A gloomy train of sorrows clouds my soul.

Though hopeless love, unpitied—though despair,
With lasting anguish fil my tortured breast,
Where Mira dwells, let no intruding care,
No heart-corroding grief her peace molest.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

MARK HARDING.

A BACKWOODS SKETCH.

BY MRS. MARY MAYNARD.

Reader, did you ever live in the "backwoods?" and did you ever attend a "backwoods ball?" Because, if you did not, you can form no idea of how folks enjoy such things there. Now *I* have; and I can assure you that for having a pleasant time, making the most of the "fleet-footed hours," and finding the greatest amount of happiness capable of being experienced in a given time, we, "children of the wilderness," are far before you who "dwell in cities."

True, it might not suit your ideas of happiness, for we cannot always command such accessaries as quadrille bands and gas-lights, or even the minor luxuries of ice creams, japonicas, white kid gloves and ditto satin slippers; but for all that, we can and do enjoy ourselves, and our otherwise dull winters are not a little enlivened by the annual festivals that are held in most of the backwoods settlements—or, at least, where there are young people enough within a moderate distance to make parties pleasant.

I am not going to tell you the precise locality of my present story; suffice it that it was my then place of residence—that it was a great deal nearer to the setting sun than you have probably ever been, and most certainly deserved the name of a "backwoods settlement," for the wilderness was all around us—and though we considered that we had quite a number of neighbors, strangers would probably have looked on us as almost hermits.

But of the place and its character more will appear in my story; and I must now inform you that it was winter, somewhere about the middle of December, and our whole settlement was busied in preparations for the great new year's ball, the time for which was rapidly approaching.

There were several unusual features attending this ball, which made it more than commonly interesting, and caused no small amount of speculating among the young folks. And first, Squire F—— volunteered the use of his new, unfinished barn for the accommodation of the revellers—a most unusual proceeding for the squire, who had all his life set his face against music and dancing; but every one read the riddle. The old fellow had lost his wife during the past year, and all the settlement knew that he was laying strong siege to the heart of pretty little widow Thomson, who loved dancing better than anything else in the world, unless it was admiration. Now the squire knew there would be a ball, and he also knew that Widow Thomson would be there, and he rather calculated to impress her with an increased sense of his importance, if he succeeded in his plans; hence the offer of the barn, which was immediately accepted.

Another interesting circumstance was the arrival among us of a most accomplished young gentleman—a Mr. Philander Simpson, who, when it became known that he was a proficient on the violin, suddenly found himself a very hero, a prize to be kept until after the great event, at any cost.

At home, in New York, Mr. Simpson's musical talent would not have kept him from starving; but in ——, it almost caused him to die of repletion, so warmly was he welcomed at the hospitable tables of the music-loving inhabitants. The warmest seat at the fireside, the best of the good cheer from the pantry, and the prettiest girl of the party were always bestowed on the happy little fiddler; and, in return, he played unstringly for the amusement of his kind entertainers. Our country fiddlers were totally eclipsed; but they bore it well—revenging themselves by laughing at the little man's airs, and learning all his choicest tunes.

The last and most interesting circumstance attending the coming festival, was the expected appearance among us of a young lady from one of the eastern cities—a Miss Browning, who, late in the autumn, had come to reside with one of our most prosperous farmers; on what terms, it was not known exactly, but certainly they were very favorable ones for all parties.

Miss Browning had her own rooms at Farmer Smith's, rode her own beautiful horse, and in every respect comported herself like one used to style in living; and the great mystery was, why such a person should come out into the wilderness to dwell!

True, Mrs. Smith herself had been a city girl; but then both she and her young lover were poor, and the backwoods offered inducements to them to come. Our minister's wife, likewise, had married and followed her husband's fortunes out in the "new home;" but Miss Browning apparently had no motive, and as from her dress and appearance it was certain she must be rich, the mystery was impenetrable.

In the few weeks that she had dwelt among us, scarcely any one had seen her, save at a distance; and when it became known that she would attend the ball, our young people were in a perfect flutter of excitement. Many of our fair damsels would have given half their possessions for a peep at a fashion-book, "just to know how people wore things now," and many and anxious were the discussions that attended the making up of dresses for this eventful evening.

Having long been elected to the responsible post of "chief friend and advisor," in the matter of dress, to my young friends. I was besieged for the few days before the ball with all manner of applications, and among the rest, wondered much that my little favorite Phœbe Crosby had not come as usual to consult me. At last, when within twenty-four hours of the time, she came; and by the downcast looks and trembling lip, I knew that something had gone wrong with my little friend.

"Why, Phœbe, what is it, child? You look as if something dreadful had happened."

"O, I know it is very silly for me to be so disappointed, but you know how much I expected to get a new frock, to wear to the ball, and now father is not able to afford it. I have worked real hard this fall, and saved all I could, and I feel almost discouraged, Mrs. M——."

Poor child! I did not wonder at her discouragements. Work, work, work, was the order of the Crosby family, and poor Phœbe found plenty of employment for her little hands in attending to the wants of an exacting step-mother and a large family of brothers and sisters.

I knew she wanted a new dress, and had fully expected it; and such a disappointment, at such a time, was almost too much for her fortitude.

"Never mind, little girl," I said, by way of comfort, "bring me over your old muslin, and I will do my best to make it presentable."

"O, you are real good, Mrs. M——, but I feel so disappointed, I don't think I shall go at all. Mother said she wouldn't, if she was me."

"O, never mind what 'mother' says this time. Bring your dress to me early in the morning." And so, a little consoled, I dismissed my visitor.

I felt a peculiar interest in little Phœbe, for, setting aside her many winning ways, I knew she was an object of much attraction to one near and dear to myself, and as such, likely to be closely connected to me some day. The greatest obstacle to this was presented in the person of Miss Julia Ann Starr, the gay young sister of Phœbe's step-mother, and who had laid violent siege to the heart of my extremely susceptible brother.

I was fully aware that Mrs. Crosby did not like her step-daughter, and that this plan of the ball was all of her contriving, to disappoint Phœbe and allow Miss Julia Ann an opportunity to bring matters to a climax. How to mend matters, I did not know; but trusting that something would occur in poor little Phœbe's favor, I resolved to wait patiently until morning.

It was yet early dawn, when a parcel was brought to me, which on opening, I found to contain an exceedingly pretty rose-colored dress, with the simple word "Phœbe" pinned on a scrap of paper. Who the kind donor was, or how they came to know of our trouble, neither Phœbe nor I could surmise; but we kept our own counsel, and hastened to make up for lost time.

As I knew the Crosby family would be large, I invited Phœbe to ride with us, and was gratified by Robert's look of unqualified admiration, as my little favorite came into the room with hood and cloak in hand, all ready for a start. Our ride was a pleasant one, and we soon drew up at Squire F——'s, among some dozens of assembled sleighs, some empty, some, like ourselves, just arrived, and others discharging their living cargoes.

The ball-room presented a strange aspect to unaccustomed eyes—with its festoons of evergreen hiding the rough walls, the great beams only partly hidden under the spruce boughs, and the lights gleaming out from amid the overhanging pine branches. Dancing, the great business of the evening, was carried on with a spirit and energy unknown to the listless frequenters of city balls; and if our beaux and belles lacked in etiquette and the minutiæ of the ball-room, they made up in real beauty, good humor, and warmth of feeling.

Of beauty, there was no lack; but pre-eminent among the assembled damsels, was one on whom every eye turned with admiration. It was Isabella Browning, the city stranger; and I watched with interest to see how she viewed our rustic festivities. It was apparent that she felt pleased with her new position, and from the eagerness with which her hand was sought, I judged she was a very agreeable partner. Her dress, a white muslin skirt and black velvet jacket, displayed to advantage her beautiful figure; and when the excitement brought a bright flush on her cheek, I thought I had never beheld so lovely an object.

"That cre's somethin' like a gal," said a rough voice behind me. "Why Mark, my man, what are you about, to let all them fellers be before you?"

I turned, and there stood one of our neighbors, an unpolished diamond of the first water, and he was addressing a young man who leaned somewhat wearily against the wall. The heavy black waves of hair were pushed back from his forehead, his eyes followed mechanically the motions of the dancers, and the folded arms and lounging attitude were all unlike the usual active movements of the young hunter—for such was Mark Harding, in every sense of the word. In all the country round, there was not one who could compete with him in feats of daring, in skill as a marksman, or in powers of endurance; and when, in addition to all this, which in the backwoods is considered the highest praise to bestow on a man, Mark was equally celebrated for his social qualities, it is little wonder that he was a favorite with the fair sex.

But not even the veriest gossip in all our settlement could accuse Mark of showing any partiality in his attentions; and the girls wondered, in secret, who would be the fortunate winner of the handsome hunter, and mistress of the very pretty "frame house," now standing lonely in the midst of the "clearing."

On the night of the ball, as I have said, he was unusually sad, and many were the speculations in consequence. Once only did something like a smile illumine his handsome countenance, and that was when little Phœbe Crosby came dancing up to me—the very image of delight. I saw the critical look bestowed on her pretty dress, and instantly occurred to me the fact that Mark's mother had possessed a variety of such articles, remnants of by-gone days, and that having, through some means, learned of poor Phœbe's distress, he had taken this method of supplying it.

He probably read my thoughts in my face, for with a deep blush he turned away—thus confirming my idea, and raising still higher my already exalted opinion of him. Having passed our dancing days, and not being favorable to late hours, myself and husband started for a pleasant ride home.

We had gone some five or six miles, when suddenly the sky became illumined with a red glare, so brilliant that even the tops of the pine trees were colored with the reflection. For an instant, we were paralyzed; and then turning about, we drove with all speed to the late scene of merriment.

A horrible picture met our gaze. The great barn, lately filled with so many forms of beauty, and resounding to the sounds of joyous revelry, was now one mass of flame, while nothing could be heard but the roaring and crackling of the burning timbers. It was never known exactly how the mischief came about, but most probably the hay stowed in the loft above, was accidentally set fire to.

At the first alarm, so dreadful was the rush made for the door, that many were thrown down and trampled upon: and the flooring above giving way, the burning masses of hay fell upon the prostrate victims, suffocating and scorching them to death. Among these, I found my poor little Phœbe, so blackened and disfigured that but for a portion of her dress, I should not have been able to recognize her. It was a dreadful scene—the old farm-house crowded with the friends of the injured, the mournful wailings of those who had come to weep over the dead, and the groups of frightened girls standing with blanched lips and distended eyes watching the destruction of the late imposing looking structure.

Poor old Farmer F—— bewailed his loss in no measured terms; and not all the persuasions of his friends could induce him to come into the house, until Widow Thomson herself went for him. Her endeavors to comfort the old man were crowned with success. He learned to look with calmness on his misfortune, though always viewing it as a judgment for his sinful compliance with worldly vanities. He has convinced the fair widow (who by the way is no longer a widow), that it is improper to dance, and a new barn has long since taken the place of the one destroyed.

At the time the fire broke out, Isabella Browning was dancing, as she had been most of the night. More than once, during the evening, she had noticed the tall, commanding figure of the handsome young Mark passing through the crowd, and felt a little piqued that one seemingly so well known should not have come with the others for an introduction to her fair self. When others were rushing in terror from the room, she stood motionless with terror, forsaken by her partner, and quite unable to seek safety in flight.

It was at this instant, when the burning brands were falling thickly, and everything threatened destruction, that a strong arm was thrown around Isabella's waist, and she was borne in safety through the struggling crowd and carried to the farm-house. Then, when the heavy garment which had been thrown over her was taken away, and she could once more see and hear, she discovered that her preserver was none other than the handsome stranger, whose manly beauty had so forcibly attracted her attention during the evening.

Terrified at her danger, bewildered at her sudden escape, and not a little confused at the discovery of who had saved her, the young girl could only give incoherent replies to Mark's anxious inquiries after her welfare; and he, mistaking her manner, attributed it to pride and reserve. They parted then, and it was several days ere Miss Browning again saw her preserver; and when they did meet, mutual consciousness caused mutual embarrassment, which was again misunderstood. He fancied that she felt her pride hurt at the idea of owing her safety to one like him; while she was unable to fully express her thanks, on seeing how coldly he received them.

Isabella Browning was an orphan, rich and uncontrolled, but far from happy in her independence. In her early childhood, she had been petted and indulged by her over-fond parents; at the same time, forbidden to exercise those feelings which were the natural impulse of her good heart. The death of her parents consigned her to the care of a guardian, who with his wife strove unweariedly to make her what nature never intended for her, viz., a fashionable woman.

In vain were the worldly lessons repeated again and again; in vain was she lectured on the broken rules of fashionable etiquette. Her teachers relinquished the hopeless task of instructing the self-willed girl in accomplishments she cared nothing about, and her guardian with reluctance gave up a long-cherished plan of uniting his rich ward with his extravagant and dissipated son.

The winter that Isabella came of age, her city friends certainly expected she would spend with them. But no; "the country, the country," was her cry. And to the country she came, away out into the backwoods, far from all she had been forced to live amongst all her life.

There is no accounting for the strange freaks love plays sometimes; certainly he displayed his fondness for opposites in thus bringing a fair city maiden out into the "western wilds," and causing her to win the heart of our handsome young hunter. And Mark, too, who all his life had expressed his horror of city people, and especially city girls! As I said before, there is no accounting for the freaks of that little tormentor, Cupid. And our young couple themselves acted strangely; for, so far from progressing on the acquaintanceship so suddenly begun, they became dreadfully shy of each other's society.

Farmer Smith complained of the few and short visits he received from his young favorite Mark, always hitherto as much at home in their house as his own. And yet Mark did not hunt much that winter; in fact, his taste in that way appeared daily to diminish.

Mrs. Smith had always foretold that Isabella would weary of the monotony of their life, and now the listless manner and abstracted air of their visitor gave her reason to think her prophecies had come true. But Miss Browning earnestly denied this, and more than ever declared her determination never to return to city life.

"But, my dear, you are young yet; you will think differently before you are twenty, and laugh at the idea of burying your wealth and accomplishments out here in the wilderness." Poor Mrs. Smith sighed as she thus spoke; she thought of the trials and hardships of her own early experience.

"O, you are quite wrong, dear Mrs. Smith," Isabella would laughingly reply. "My wealth is just the thing that is wanted here; and as for accomplishments, I never had any—so there is nothing to sacrifice, after all."

"Well, your beauty and delicacy then, dear! You must acknowledge that you were never fitted for our rough life. Look at those hands, and imagine them employed about the rough work of the kitchen and dairy!"

"And what better employment could they find?" the young girl would exclaim, clasping her white fingers and laughing at her friend's horror. "But there, I wont argue with you any more. You shall see that I keep my word. There is no necessity for me to marry and be a household drudge. I mean to live and die a happy old maid."

"No, that you don't; and if you did, our young farmers would not allow it. So make no rash resolves, Miss Isabella."

The young girl dreaded Farmer Smith's raillery, possibly because she felt he guessed some of her thoughts; so putting on an indifferent air, she announced her determination of taking a long ride, as the weather was mild and fine.

"Almost too mild, Miss Bella," the farmer observed, as he glanced at the sky. "These very fine days, at this time of year, usually forebode a storm."

"O, I am not afraid of a little rain; and as I have set my mind on having a ride this afternoon, please don't spoil my pleasure."

The good-natured farmer yielded, against his better judgment; the sleek and petted steed was brought prancing to the door, and with merry laughter, his gay mistress mounted and rode away, kissing her hand to the quiet friend she saw watching her from the window.

"Don't stay long, nor ride far," shouted the farmer, as he saw the gathering clouds in the west.

"I am going to the other side of the mountain," was the answer, as the wild girl gathered up her reins and dashed gleefully off at her favorite pace.

"Surely she will not attempt anything so foolish as to cross the ford, now when it is swollen with the melted snows!" said Mrs. Smith, as she came to the door and looked at the foreboding appearance of the weather.

"I wish I had not let her go, wife. She is daring enough to do anything, and I should never forgive myself, if aught of ill befell her."

The winning ways of their young friend had completely won the hearts of the good farmer and his wife, and they could not contemplate without horror the possibility of danger threatening her.

"Well, don't fret, husband. One don't know how to refuse her anything she wants, and I guess she will come home safe."

But in spite of her seeming calmness, the good woman was anything but easy; and her husband felt equally, if not more unhappy. Restlessly he wandered to and fro through the house, watching the rising clouds with still increasing anxiety, and listening eagerly for the sound of returning steps. But hours passed! The wind rose, and the rain poured down in torrents, and still the young girl was absent. At last, the striking of the house-clock, announcing the approach of night, seemed to give the farmer an electric shock.

Springing from the chair into which he had wearily thrown himself, he declared his intention of instantly setting out in search of the wanderer, and was in the act of opening the door, when he was met at the door by Mark, who, wet and weary, had come in for shelter from the storm. It needed few words to tell the cause of the evident distress in the usually quiet household; but it needed all the young man's self-control to hide the emotion caused by the tidings he heard. A firm compression of the pale lips, a gasping sob choked down by the strong will, a few hurried questions, asked in a low tone and with evident effort, and Mark Harding was once more in the saddle—his noble horse urged to his utmost speed, dashing boldly on, fearless of danger, heedless of storm and wind and darkness. Long ere he reached the fearful ford, the violence of the storm had abated; but the roaring of the swollen waters came like distant cannon on his ear.

It was now quite night; but the clouds breaking away, the moon gave forth a feeble light, which enabled him to see objects at some distance. The scene on reaching the ford was terrific. The wild waters rushed madly past, bearing on their foamy waves great trees, uprooted by the violence of the wind, and drawn into the surging stream by the breaking away of the soft banks.

Mark was all unused to fear; and yet his heart stood still with affright, as he pictured to himself the probable fate of the young girl, should she have attempted to cross that wild torrent. Neither was he one to feel at a loss on what to decide, and yet for some moments he sat wavering in uncertainty.

Not for many moments, however, did he meditate; for doubt, anxiety and fear were all lost in one acute sensation of horror, on beholding the object of his search on the opposite bank, apparently trying to decide where was the best place to cross. His voice was drowned by the roaring of the waters, but by signs he strove to make her understand the danger, and not to attempt to cross. As well might he have signed to the winds not to blow, or bid the torrent be still. Apparently frightened at the rapidly increasing width of the stream, she urged her frightened steed to make the fearful plunge, and in an instant horse and rider were buried amid the foamy waves.

One instant Mark sat stupefied; then taking a firmer seat in the saddle, he dashed into the boiling torrent, and with a silent prayer, resolved to rescue her or die. Isabella's horse, terrified at the wild scene, and the continual striking of the floating branches, soon became unmanageable; and plunging madly, threw its rider just as Mark's more powerful steed carried him to her side. One moment, the dripping hat and plume was floating wildly on the waters; the next, a strong arm bore the wet and almost drowned figure from the contact of the waves, and once more in her preserver's arms, Isabella was rescued from a dreadful death.

There was a fearful doubt in Mark's mind, as he felt how violently his noble horse was struggling for life. Could they reach the bank? It was done, at last; and dismounting, he strove to bring back life and sense to the inanimate form clasped to his heart.

None heard the words addressed by Mark Harding to his companion, save she alone for whom they were intended; but in that hour of joy and terror, pride, reserve, doubts and fears were cast aside, and those two hearts confessed the long-hidden, well kept secret.

Once possessed of the knowledge of Isabella's regard, and no longer deterred by the fear of being supposed a mercenary adventurer, Mark became quite a changed man. True, he gave up his wild wood adventures, and sought for less dangerous amusements; but the cloud that for months had shadowed his brow, vanished before the sunshine of his smiles, and once more he was the merry spirit of frolic and fun in all the gay gatherings among the young folks.

Their courtship was not of long duration, for when the bright autumn came, painting the trees around his pretty home with every variety of brilliant tint, then he claimed the hand of his betrothed and they were married. There were many among Mark's numerous acquaintances who foretold that the gay city girl would soon grow tired of her backwoods residence; but they were false prophets.

Possessed of ample means to gratify her every wish and want, it was the pride of the young wife to adorn and beautify their home, and a few months served to render it dear to her.

Years have passed since then, and the original dwelling has given place to a handsome mansion, whose surroundings and adornments equal anything of the kind to be seen within many miles of them. And yet they dwell no longer in the wilderness! The forest has almost disappeared. Towns and villages have sprung up around them, and the whole face of the country has changed.

The Hardings have not only kept pace with, but generally have been a little in advance of, the improvements around them. They have always been a happy family, rejoicing in their beautiful children, their increasing possessions, and in fact enjoying the good things of this world to the fullest extent; and yet none envy them, none would strip them of one of their possessions, for all know that Mark Harding is a faithful steward of the wealth entrusted to his care. The kind heart and the ready hand are his; none leave his hospitable roof cold or hungry, and the poor and the distressed call him their best friend.

Isabella is no longer the gay young girl we first saw her; she has grown middle-aged and matronly. But she still has her old fondness for seeing people enjoy themselves, unrestrained by form and affectation, and she is celebrated for giving large parties to the young folks, into whose trials and troubles, love affairs, triumphs and disappointments, she enters with an interest peculiarly her own. In return, she is beloved by all her acquaintances, and with her husband is considered the greatest ornament to the society of their neighborhood.

After Phœbe Crosby's dreadful death, my brother left his western home, and Miss Starr has vainly striven to find another to occupy the vacancy there made. In spite of all Mrs. Crosby's match making manœuvres in her favor, it is the general opinion that the fair Julia Ann will live and die an old maid.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

O, WHAT IS THE MATTER?

BY "OLD PRECIOUS."

O, what is the matter with Bella, to-night?
Her eyes, once so timid, are flashing with light,
Her cheeks are suffused with a soft carmine hue,
Like rose-buds, just opening to sunshine and dew;
Her voice, once so low in its musical tone,
Now warbles a gladness I never have known—
A passionate cadence as tender and deep,
As if angels had taught her their songs in her sleep.

A swift, glowing smile o'er her red lips has stole,
As if some sunny thought had just wakened her soul;
Low whispering fancies, so joyous and bright,
They deepen her glances with hope and delight,
Now brightening, now shading, those speaking "brown eyes;"
You'd deem them twin-stars, wandered down from the skies,
As soft glancing up, with a shy, startled look,
Her soul trembles in them like light in a brook.

O, what has thrown o'er her such exquisite grace?
Did she steal from the red-rose the blush on her face?
Or learn from the notes of a wild, warbling bird,
The music that floats from her lips in a word?
The glance of her bright eyes, say, what do they tell?
'Tis hope of the future, that lights them in "Bell:"
But see, the bright flush, stealing soft o'er her cheek,
Has told me a tale that *she never would speak.*

That Love, floating by, on his musical wing,
Has taken her heart for a rose-bud of spring,
And opening the quivering leaves of her soul,
Entranced and beguiled it beyond her control—
Waving his wand o'er the fountain of feeling,
Her glow of delight his joys all revealing,
Then chanting a melody tender and low,
That quickened the tides of her heart in their flow.

He taught her to warble the raptures she heard,
Till her heart grew as light as the song of a bird;
Now throbbing and thrilling, in musical chime,
Beneath the wild thrills of his exquisite rhyme;
So sweet the dear accents, so tender and kind,
That they fettered her soul, her being and mind;
I think I can tell you this heart-chaining spell
All lay in the love yet unspoken by "Bell."

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE STEP-MOTHER.

BY RALPH TRYON.

ALANSON PARKER was seated in his library and deeply immersed in thought. His usually placid brow at present wore a shade of perplexity, and the fingers of his nervous, delicate hand which shaded it, trembled not a little. That day was the anniversary of his wife's death, which made him a widower of a year's standing, and completed the expiration of that probation which the world imposes ere it sanctions a second hymeneal connection.

He at length rose and took from a concealed drawer in his writing-desk a casket, and from that a miniature, on which he gazed for some moments with tender interest. Of course the picture of his departed wife, says our anticipative reader, but such is not the fact. Her pale, inelegant features, which were correctly portrayed on the canvass, ornamented by a rich gilt frame, and suspended from the wall, were in marked contrast to the witching charms of the fair being represented by the miniature. The former was the personation of mature life, the latter, the very dawn of womanhood.

The casket and its treasure was soon restored to its secret resting-place, a memento of disappointed hopes and still cherished affection, which had made the gay man of the world a sober man of thought, and early wove the threads of premature age amid his dark hair. A gentle tug at the bell-cord was answered by the appearance of an old domestic whom he directed to inform his daughter that he desired her presence at once.

Charlotte Parker, then in her sixteenth year, was indeed an object which commanded admiration. A woman in form and stature, with features of surpassing loveliness, she still retained a childish simplicity and the wayward but engaging fancies years of indulgence had entailed upon her, yet with frank and generous impulses which endeared her to all. As she entered the apartment, somewhat surprised with the formal summons, her father took her hand, and in a tone of deep tenderness said to her:

"My dear child, I have sent for you in order that we might have a short but serious talk of the future. I need not ask you if you remember the sad event which occurred one year ago to day."

"Dear mother, she can never be forgotten," cried the fair girl, throwing herself upon his knee, and trying to smother her sobs upon his shoulder.

"Yes, my daughter, your mother has long since become an inhabitant of that unseen, better world, and has only left us her memory to cherish, and the calm, pure example of her life cannot too well be remembered by her child."

A silence of some moments ensued, and when broken, Mr. Parker had assumed a calmer, and seemingly more formal tone, as he said:

"Charlotte, you have now attained an age when a young woman is expected to make her appearance in the world, an event which a father, however great his solicitude, cannot shape or well advise, but which requires the staff of maternal counsel. Have you ever thought of this?"

"I only think that any place, however remote from society, which contained my kind father and dear Aunt Susie, would be productive of all the happiness I could hope for!"

"That speaks well for your affection, my child, which I must soon put to the test. You are deeply attached then to your aunt?"

"She has been a mother, aunt and companion to me, and everything kind and good."

"Still she has not a mother's right to advise and control, and this brings me to the point which is the object of this interview. Charlotte, I am about to marry, for your sake and my own; and inclination as well as duty on my part, has prompted this step."

The young girl sprang from his arms as though a viper had stung her.

"I was not prepared for this," she answered, while her eyes flashed with displeasure.

"We are frequently unprepared for that which concerns our welfare."

"I am not prepared to receive a new affection, to the exclusion of one entertained for years, nor can my heart be compelled to it."

"You would reflect upon me, my child?"

"I have not the right, and yet I cannot reconcile this step with my previous estimation of my father's character."

"I forgive you, Charlotte, and you will regret this display of passion in your calmer moments. You may now retire, for I would be alone."

She suddenly left the room, without a word, and sought the drawing room, to give full vent to her tears. As she threw herself into a chair, she was surprised by a gentle touch upon her shoulder, and turning, she beheld the person of all others she felt could give her consolation and advice.

"What can have happened, to move my dear Charly thus?" was uttered by a low, musical voice.

"O, Aunt Susie, is it you whom I wished to see so much at this moment?"

"Is this, rather, my brave Charly, weeping like a careless little girl who has broken her doll? For I can think of no serious cause for her great grief."

"Don't speak so lightly, dear aunt. I have just had an interview with my father, and he has told me that he is about to marry!"

The features of Miss Mansfield, the aunt, and they were those of a beautiful woman who had not seen thirty-five years, were tinged for a moment with a faint blush, as she answered with a simple:

"Well."

"But it is not well! It is shameful—disgusting!"

"Charlotte, is it possible that I hear you speak thus of so kind a father?"

"He will have but little kindness left for me, I imagine, when the step-mother arrives!"

"Perhaps you object to the person. If so, it is wrong to make a kind parent the subject of your injustice."

"I neither know nor care who she is. I only know that some person, probably lured by his wealth, would occupy the place of my dear, departed mother."

"How can you judge the motives of one you say you do not even know?"

"What motives can a woman have to marry an old widower, except those I have named?"

"My dear Charly, it is useless to pursue this subject further. It will not alter your father's determination, nor can the discussion produce any satisfaction to yourself."

"Even you now side against me!"

"Do you not see that you are in the wrong, since this conduct of yours makes you unjust to one who has never spoken a harsh word to you?"

"Forgive me, my dear aunt, I know I am secure in your affection, but I am very unhappy."

"Clouds precede the sunshine, my dear child, so wait patiently and they will disperse. Listen to me, and I will give you the outline of a long story which relates to a second marriage; and when I tell you that I knew the parties well, perhaps you will find it of some interest."

"Let me hear it, Aunt Susie. Anything to divert my mind from its present state will be welcome."

"In a certain place—the locality is unimportant—there lived an old gentleman and his two daughters. He was what the world calls rich, and spared no expense in their education. We will speak of them by the names of Martha and Mary. Martha was five years older than her sister, who at the time of our story was not far from your age, Charlotte. In person they were very unlike, the elder having no pretensions to beauty, although her kind disposition endeared her to all. The younger was flattered and caressed, her wayward follies allowed, while her spirits were wild and buoyant, as her sister's were gentle and lowly.

"A young lawyer came to that place on business, and chance, or rather Providence, led him to an acquaintance with this family. The father became greatly attached to him, while his splendid person and manly qualities soon won the interest of the sisters. His business must have been completed, but the spring passed and he still remained. Then he was called away for a brief space, and returned to find the old gentleman suffering his last illness.

"So great was the confidence that he placed in Charles Peters, that in his will he made him the administrator of his estate, and faithfully was that trust discharged. His kindness to the afflicted girls was gratefully appreciated, but Mary read a deeper meaning in his admiring glance than ordinary friendship, and her own heart became conscious that it was no longer under the control of its mistress. Love soon finds language, and in this instance was mutually acknowledged, and for a time flowed on in undisturbed tranquility and happiness.

"The young man was obliged again to take leave of them for a short time. Meanwhile, Martha had been growing paler each day. Her step lost its elasticity, and though she did not complain, her sister saw she was gradually sinking into confirmed indisposition. In her alarm, a physician was summoned, who, after a brief examination, looked grave, and recommended an immediate change of air.

"Martha contrived to be much alone, and one day while engaged in a solitary walk, her sister discovered the momentous secret of her life. A journal in which this pure-minded girl wrote her daily acts and thoughts, was inadvertently left upon her table, and revealed the surprising fact that she had long and hopelessly loved Charles Peters.

"I cannot go into detail, but poor Mary, after long and painful struggles, and with a bleeding heart, formed the resolution of rescuing her sister from death, though obliged to bid farewell to her own happiness. She determined to effect the marriage of Charles with her sister, and her resolution was strengthened by the alarming symptoms Martha daily displayed. When her lover returned, how wildly her heart beat as she was clasped in his ardent embrace. To accomplish her purpose she affected gayety and waywardness when she felt her heart was breaking. Assuming an air of playfulness, she asked him to grant her a favor. She even made him give her his solemn assurance, which he did, not suspecting anything serious.

"When she informed him of her real intent, the young man was thunderstruck with astonishment. He believed it a dream, a jest, anything but reality; but when with tearful seriousness she revealed her sister's secret, and intimated her firm resolve never to wed at the expense of her happiness, and then fearing her own weakness, and to prevent his expostulations, took a solemn oath to that effect, the lover became aware of the certainty of his doom, and caring little for what afterwards became of him, was drawn into her plan with very little opposition on his part.

"Hope, also, might have whispered to him that the amiable girl, so unconscious of the pains she had inflicted on two loving hearts, might not long survive to be an obstacle to any one. Some thought like this might have crossed his brain, for the physician had given his opinion that consumption had laid its cold hand upon her, but if such, the cause he never uttered it.

"Martha's happiness, after Charles had made the proposal for her hand, was so great that both felt some consolation in her joy, which had been purchased with such a painful sacrifice. They were married, went abroad, where they remained more than a year, and soon after their return a little daughter blessed them with its presence.

"Thus many years passed and the babe had become almost a woman, when her kind mother was called away to a better world. Mary had never married, but the flame of the old fire still burned in her heart, while her relationship would not allow her to absent herself entirely from the house of her former lover, who, though still a handsome man, bore the marks of premature age. Besides she became greatly attached to her little niece; hence it is not at all surprising that their old vows were renewed. But, Charly, I have remained here too long, I must speak a word to your father, and return home instanter. You shall have the conclusion of the story when next we meet."

"When will that be, dear aunt.

"After your father's wedding. Adieu, dear child, till then." And before Charlotte could detain her she had left the room.

Several days after, as Charlotte was reading in her own apartment, the old housekeeper came into the room, with her homely features lighted with smiles, as she said:

"Well, Miss Charlotte, she's come at last."

"She! who?"

"Why, my new mistress, to be sure; and your father desires you to come at once into the library, where he is waiting for you."

The impetuous girl taken thus by surprise, with head erect and flashing eyes, walked quickly into her father's presence. She did not deign so much as to look at the lady, who, closely veiled, leaned upon his arm, but said in not the gentlest tones:

"I have obeyed your command, sir."

"My child," he answered, with a meaning smile, "I simply wished to present you to your future mother, and I trust you will be very excellent friends."

Charlotte bowed coldly, and moved towards the window.

"Charly, darling, this will never do," was uttered in a well known voice.

The fair girl turned quickly, flew to the veiled lady, threw aside the lace, and then clasping her arms about her neck, fairly swung her round in the wildness of her delight.

"O, Aunt Susie, how could you cheat me so? And, father dear, forgive your headstrong girl. To both I shall be a dutiful child henceforth."

The happy pair answered her with affectionate kisses.

"Ah, I see it all now, wooden-head that I have been," exclaimed the joyous girl, "that story—you are the Mary, and father the handsome Charles Peters. I do not wonder now that you left off so abruptly. But I ought to be very angry that you did not invite me to the wedding."

"That, mad-cap, would have interfered with the joyous surprise we had in store for you," said the father. "And now, my child, I dare say you do not think a step mother such a terrible thing after all."

DOGS.

It is hard to believe that two races so spliced together as the canine and human, do not live over—hard to feel that some dogs are not better worth saving, and some men more fit to rot in unhallowed ground and be forever forgotten, than some dogs. Creatures so intelligent, and yet so patient of our neglect—so sensitive, and yet so forgiving of our roughness and our ingratitude! So gentle when we do not seem to love them, so overjoyed when we do! So uncomplaining even of hunger, if we are not ready to feed them; even of storm and cold, when turned out from the bright fire on a winter's night, to watch for us while we sleep warm in our beds. So ready to fight and die for us, and those of our poorest belongings! Surely, for qualities like these, though they go upon four legs—qualities that would grace a Christian or a hero—there should be some outer vistebule in religion. We might even let a child pray, it seems to me, that through the open door of heaven for the humble, where he is taught that the beggar that takes alms from his hand may sit above him, his faithful dog may be permitted to look in.—*N. P. Willis.*

A BEE LINE!

Nicholas the first, of Russia, peace to his remains, had quite an original way of transacting business. He sent one day for his engineers and gave them eight days to bring him the route of a railroad to connect St. Petersburg with Moscow. At the end of the allotted time the plan was prepared.

"What," said he, looking at it, "what is all this—these twists that the cursed, serpentine track? You must have misunderstood me."

"Sire," said the spokesman, "we have drafted the shortest route which would embrace on the line the leading towns and villages."

"Give me the pencil and rule," he said, and he struck a bee line from one city to the other. "Here—you understand me."

"But, sire, you leave the large towns entirely out of sight."

"That is their affair, let them come within sight."

And so the road was built as straight as an I.—*Saturday Gazette.*

[Gathered for The Flag of our Union.]

A Budget of Fun.

A baker has invented a new kind of yeast. It makes bread so light that a pound of it weighs only four ounces.——We see that in many parts of the country prizes are awarded to ladies for feats in horsewomanship. Poor Pilgarlic says that he is sorry any extra inducements should be given in this direction, for his wife has "mounted the high horse" ever since the first day he married her.——An aged bachelor being asked if he had ever witnessed a public execution, replied, "No, but I once saw a marriage!"——*Sirs.*—"Julius, what profession does your brudder follow now?" *Julius.*—"He's larnin' to be a vocalist!" *Sirs.*—"What am he larnin'?" *Julius.*—"At Sing Sing."——A lady leaving home, was thus addressed by her little boy: "Mama, will you remember and buy me a penny whistle, and let it be a religious one, that I can use it on Sunday."——We know a carpenter's apprentice, who, being too lazy to work, about once an hour bumps his nose against a post till it bleeds, and then sits down to enjoy himself and have a good resting spell.——Why is the inside of everything unintelligible? Because we cannot make it out.——How can a man, who has no wings, be said to be "winged" in an affair of honor? Because, in fighting a duel, he makes a goose of himself.—— "How shall I sell my horse?" said a certain doctor to a horse-jockey, "his tail came off in less than six hours after I bought him." "Why, sell him by wholesale," replied the other, "for sure no honorable man will retail him."——A printer out West, whose first son happened to be a very short, fat little fellow, named him Brevier Fullfaced Jones.——An elderly gentleman travelling in a stage, was amused by a constant fire of words between two ladies. One at last kindly inquired if the conversation didn't make his head-ache? He replied, "No, madam; I have been married upwards of twenty-eight years."——The fellow who is courting Miss Demeanor, thinks very seriously of breaking off the engagement.——When Jeremy Taylor was introduced to the Archbishop of Canterbury, he was told by the prelate that his extreme youth was a bar to his present employment. "If your grace," replied Taylor, "will excuse me this fault, I promise, if I live, to mend it."

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE STAGE-STRUCK HERO.

BY THE OLD 'UN.

"BISTRE William Barrybore?"

Such was the question asked by a blotchy-looking individual with ferrety eyes and wild carroty hair, of that unique and testy individual, the late William Barrymore, then manager of the Lion Theatre in this city, as he sat in his *sanctum sanctorum*, in his long surtout, with his legs crossed, and nervously trotting his rubber-cased feet.

"Sir?" said the manager.

"I idquired," replied the youthful stranger, who appeared to have a chronic cold in his head, "if your dabe was William Barrybore?"

"No, sir! it is not!" snapped the manager, in his most vinegary tone.

"You surprise be!" said the stranger.

"Do I? Well, sir, you have evidently mistaken your man. I know no such person as you have mentioned in the establishment. My name, sir, is Barrymore—William Barrymore, and nothing shorter."

"I said so."

"You did not say so, sir!" thundered the manager. "But if you are looking for the manager of the Lion, I am your man. Now, sir—what's your business? Don't keep the stage waiting."

"I want to cub oud as an agdor," replied the young man.

"O, you do, do you?" said Barrymore, who anticipated some amusement. "Well, sir, are you prepared to give me a specimen of your powers?"

The quizby-looking individual, nodded, divested himself of his woolen mittens and overcoat, and then striking a frenzied attitude, commenced:

"By dabe is Dorbal, od the Grabdlad hills
By father fed his flogs, a frugal swaid,
Whose oadly care was to idcrease his stock
Ad keep hyself, his oadly suid, at hoab."

"Your father was a very sensible 'mad, thed,'" replied Barrymore. "Your blank verse is blank enough in all conscience, now let us hear you recite something in rhyme."

The panting aspirant struck another attitude, and shouted:

"Ad biddight id the forest shades
Bedeatre raged his lubbad bad,
True as the steel of their tridd blades,
Rech bere's hard as bad."

"Bravo!" shouted Barrymore, clapping his hands. "Bravo, Mr. Marco Bozzaris! Now give us a touch of Gloster."

The unfortunate victim commenced the famous soliloquy:

"Now is the widder of our discoted
Bade glorious subber by this sud of York."

"That will do," said his tormentor, "you've got your 'widder' in the 'suds' and there you can leave her. Do you think you could play Romeo?"

"Roabeo!" cried the victim. "Why, by dear sir, Roabeo is by weakdess. By face, figure ad voice are peculiarly adabted to id."

"Very well, give us a specimen," said Barrymore.

The unfortunate wretch fell into another attitude, clasping his hands, throwing his head back, stretching one long leg far behind him, and then, putting on a fearful, feeble grin, commenced:

"Id is be sad, ad Juliet is by sud,
Arise, fair sud, (sun) add chase the envious bood, (moon)
That is already sig (sick) add pale with grief
That thou, her baid, art far bore fair thad shes."

"Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you, and infinitely gratified with your performance," said the manager; "but before you can appear, allow me to suggest that there are certain indispensable preliminaries to be gone through with."

"I ab aware of that," replied the youthful stranger. "If you would have the kidedess to tell me what I shall do, I shall be infidilty obliged to you."

"Well, sir," said Barrymore. "You must go directly home. Got a large tub in your house?"

"Yes, sir," said the wondering aspirant for dramatic honors.

"Very well," pursued the manager. "Fill it about three quarters full of hot water."

"Of hod wader?"

"They were my words, sir. Then divest yourself of your apparel and place your feet therein. As soon the water becomes lukewarm, retire to your virtuous couch, which must be well covered with blankets and quilts. Then drink about a quart of boiling hot mint tea—a little whiskey in it will do no harm, and you will fall asleep. Repeat the same proceeding the next night."

"But can't I abbear od the stage without going through all thad?"

"No, sir!" snapped the manager.

"Why not?"

"Because if you attempt to speak with that shocking bad cold in your head, the audience will hiss you off the stage."

"Cold id by head!" roared the aspirant. "Bistre Barrybore! do you mead to idsult be? I was bord (born) so."

"And I *never* was *bored* so!" snarled the manager. "Never! You an actor! You aren't fit for a candle-snuffer. Avaunt! your bones are marrowless! Out of my sight, ruffian! and never dare to darken my doors again!"

"Bray codsidder by feelige—"

"Codsidder! You scoundrel!" roared the manager; "what do you mean, you rascal, by talking Choctaw to me? I'm an Englishman, and I never studied Choctaw or Chimpanzee. There's the door!" he shouted, starting up. "Begone! or I wont be answerable for your safety."

The aspirant fled and never renewed his application; so that the ferocity of our lamented managerial friend deprived the stage of a star of the greatest magnitude, one who would have rivalled Forrest and Macready.

$600!!

SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS IN PRIZES.

TO BE PAID IN GOLD DOLLARS!

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION has kept the van of all literary weekly journals in this country for the last *eleven years*, and is a "household word" from Maine to California, gladdening the firesides of rich and poor, in town and country, all over the vast extent of this Union. In order to meet the liberal patronage of the public with corresponding liberality, the publisher has resolved to offer

TEN PRIZES IN GOLD!

So arranged as to be divided among the persons who shall forward to us the ten largest clubs for THE FLAG OF OUR UNION between the 1st of December, 1856, and the 1st day of February, 1857, being a period of about sixty days.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION

is an elegant, moral and refined MISCELLANEOUS FAMILY JOURNAL. It is now the most popular literary weekly paper in America, a reputation which it has enjoyed for *eleven years!* circulating at the present time more than any other miscellaneous weekly journal in the country, with the exception of *Ballou's Pictorial.*

It is devoted to polite literature, and it embraces

NEWS, TALES, FORMS, SKETCHES, STORIES OF THE SEA, ADVENTURES, BIOGRAPHIES, WIT AND HUMOR, AND NOVELETTES,

written expressly for the paper by the best and most popular writers of the country. It is also spiced with a record of the notable events of the times, of peace and war, of discoveries and improvements occurring in either hemisphere, forming an intelligent and instructive companion. In politics, and on all sectarian questions, it is strictly neutral; being

A PAPER FOR THE MILLION,

and a welcome visitor to the home circle. It contains the foreign and domestic news of the day, so condensed as to present the greatest possible amount of intelligence. No advertisements are admitted to the paper, thus offering the entire sheet, which is of THE MAMMOTH SIZE, for the instruction and amusement of the general reader. An unrivalled corps of contributors are regularly engaged, and every department is under the most finished and perfect system that experience can suggest, forming an *original paper.*

THE FLAG is printed on fine white paper, with new, clear and beautiful type, and contains 1240 square inches, being a large weekly paper of eight super royal quarto pages.

THE PRIZES.

To the person who shall send us the *first* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	$200 00
To the person who shall send us the *second* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	100 00
To the person who shall send us the *third* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	75 00
To the person who shall send us the *fourth* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	60 00
To the person who shall send us the *fifth* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	50 00
To the person who shall send us the *sixth* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	40 00
To the person who shall send us the *seventh* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	30 00
To the person who shall send us the *eighth* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	20 00
To the person who shall send us the *ninth* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	15 00
To the person who shall send us the *tenth* largest club we will present us *gold*.....	10 00

These prizes are to be paid in *gold dollars*, that there may be no doubt of their value.

☞ No person will be considered a competitor for the prize who does not send us at least fifty subscribers.

TERMS:—INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

1 subscriber, one year.....	$2 00
4 subscribers, "	7 00
10 " "	15 00

Any person sending us *twelve* subscribers, at the last rate, shall receive the *thirteenth* copy gratis. Thus every thirteenth copy is clear profit to the getter up of a club, except to the persons winning the first two prizes.

Any person sending us *fifty* subscribers, shall receive the eight volumes complete of our "Pictorial," elegantly and uniformly bound in full gilt, with illustrated titlepages and indexes, containing nearly *ten thousand* fine illustrations.

It is very important that the names, accompanied by the money, should be sent to us as fast as they are obtained, that we may be able to print an ample number of papers to meet the demand. Therefore, as soon as ten subscribers are obtained, the person who has procured the club can forward them with the money, and he or she can then add to the club any number of names at the same rate, and the number will be duly credited to the account of the person sending, until February 1, 1857.

It is not requisite that the entire club should be taken in one town; we will send the papers to any neighboring postoffice to that where the club is gotten up, but all subscriptions must come through the same agent in order to be counted to his or her credit. This offer does not apply to any regular wholesale agent of our papers—the clubs must be *bona fide, and each name to be sent with the money.*

The result will be duly published, and evidence of the receipt of each prize, by the successful parties, will be given.

☞ Sample copies of the paper furnished gratis.

M. M. BALLOU, *Publisher and Proprietor,*
No. 22 Winter Street, Boston, Mass.

☞ *The Flag of our Union* and *Ballou's Pictorial* are sent to one address for $4 per annum.

☞ Any postmaster can receive either of our papers, to his own address, at the lowest club rate.

THE FLAG OF OUR

MATURIN M. BALL
EDITOR AND PROP

☞ Terms of the FLAG OF OUR U... num, invariably in advance... expiration of the time paid for. Sen...

TO CORRESPOND

☞ For years we have devoted ev... week to the answering of various que... titude of readers, far and near, by lett... have multiplied upon us constantly, ... mined to devote a brief space under th... pose. This will save us postage, also a...

H. C. D.—The address of Rev. E. H. C... city. He is prepared to address ly... all parts of the country. We cann... C. B.—You are wrong and your frie... wary is not so large as the ostrich... cannot fly, its wings being very sm... the feathers. It inhabits the hotter... W. L.—We will send you The Fla... Ballou's Pictorial together for $4... terms—the postage you will pay at t... it being one half cent per copy o... paid quarterly in advance.

MADELINE.—The manuscript you refe... or destroyed. We do not prete... sketches or poems when declined... and residence should be written pla... the article always, to prevent mista...

O. M. M.—We have no question upon... of, as it regards punishment in sch... was truly a gentleman, would resen... lishment upon the person of one of t...

H. A.—The story is a very readable o... but its moral tendency is questiona... ideas on this subject, and cathe and v... willing to admit into our columns, ... would cause a blush on the cheek of ... N. S. P.—Ingraham is the author of ... of, he no longer writes in this c... minister of the Episcopal Church... reach him, if addressed to Rev. J. H... Alabama.

E. H. S.—Betting is pour business, and ... lost, for bowling as a game was know... thirteenth century. It proved a de... Charles II at Tunbridge.

BRIAN L.—The verses were duly rec... and shall appear in the forthcoming ... C. D.—If a will commit the proper ad... next week.

WINTER WEATH

Bleak December! Ah! ther... the moan of that blast that ra... so fiercely, and drives the gray... sun, and sweeps the dust in the s... eddies, and shakes the leafless... dies as erst Coriolanus "flutter... in Corioli." The teamster be... fingers; the lips of his horse ... frost; the news-boy looks blue... girls hurry along the sidewalks... were after them. There is no d... have crossed the threshold of th... land winter, a season prolonge... the almanacs, with reckless di... tell us is spring.

Is it a dreary season? Is it a... as Mr. Chadband would ask—o... Mark Tapley would call "jol... pends entirely upon the point of... we regard it. To those who... warmed with furnaces, whose ti... cate summer head, whose dra... into conservatories filled with... double windows exclude northe... feet tread on three-fold carpets... dismal season. They dream of... of concerts, of a ceaseless roun... interchanged hospitalities, and w... crowded with delights. To all... firesides, good books, pleasant h... terror in the period of storms.

But the poor! Ah! how w... side of the picture. Painfully... in the pleasant summer months... dened, in spite of their condition... vading sunshine that is the'sm... the period of wind and snow ... how their hearts sink within the... anxiety they watch the chang... Alas! they need no thermome... temperature. The blood in th... mercury. Their hopes rest on t... ed follows. Equal to the eye... equal in their earthly lot, their... should never be in vain. We s... moans in the pauses of the spe... should think of their suffering... counting-houses and drawing ro... seek them out, not waiting to... volunteer the help that they n... think, when the viewless hand... shaking our casements, how... brother needs our aid to fence f... feel not.

RELIGION AND INSANITY.—... philanthropist, says, that amon... of crazy people with whom her... have brought her into compan... not found one individual, how... turbulent, that could not be cal... and prayer, turned in upon h... The power of religious sentim... shattered souls seems miraculou...

CLUB PRICES OF OUR PA... observed that we give every t... those getting up clubs on our pa... ing year. Last year we gave on... This makes quite a difference t... is getting up the club.

A SOLDIERLY ANSWER.—W... just before the battle of Aghoo... Carn, who had been reconnoiter... how many there were, he replied... fight, enough to kill, and enough...

EARLY RISING.—If you wan... and long-lived, get up betimes; ... that pallor and debility are me... by all means lie abed till about ...

CHARITY.—The sum collecte... for the sufferers by the French ... $20,621 72.

A TRIAL.—A long rainy Sun... try is a sore trial to the patience... ern Job.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION.

MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

☞ For years we have devoted certain hours of each week to the answering of various questions from our multitude of readers, far and near, by letter; but these queries have multiplied upon us constantly, until we have determined to devote a brief space under this head, to the purpose. This will save us postage, also much valuable time.

H. C. D.—The address of Rev. E. H Chapin is New York city. He is prepared to address lyceums this winter in all parts of the country. We cannot tell you his terms.
C. B —You are wrong and your friend right. The cassowary is not so large as the ostrich. It runs swiftly, but cannot fly, its wings being very small and hidden under the feathers. It inhabits the hottest regions of Asia.
W. W. L —We will send you The Flag of our Union and Ballou's Pictorial together for $4 a year, our regular terms—the postage you will pay at your own post-office, it being one half cent per copy on each paper, when paid quarterly in advance.
MADELINE.—The manuscript you refer to has been mislaid or destroyed. We do not pretend to return brief sketches or poems when declined. The writer's name and residence should be written plainly on some part of the article always, to prevent mistakes.
G. E. M.—We have no question upon the point you speak of, as it regards punishment in school. No teacher who was truly a gentleman, would resort to corporeal punishment upon the person of one of the opposite sex.
H. A.—The story is a very readable one, and will written, but its moral tendency is questionable. We are tenacious on this point, and cache and vigilance we are not a minister of the Episcopal Church. Your letter would reach him, if addressed to Rev. J. H. Ingraham, Mobile, Alabama.
E. R. S.—Betting is poor business, and you have certainly lost, for bowling as a game was known as far back as the thirteenth century. It proved a daily recreation with Charles II. at Tunbridge.
BESSIE L.—The verses were duly received, are accepted, and shall appear in the forthcoming number.
C. D.—We will consult the proper authority, and answer next week.

WINTER WEATHER.

Bleak December! Ah! there's no mistaking the moan of that blast that rattles the windows so fiercely, and drives the gray scud across the sun, and sweeps the dust in the street in whirling eddies, and shakes the flounced silks of the ladies as erst Coriolanus "fluttered the Volscians in Corioli." The teamster beats his mittened fingers; the lips of his horse are fringed with frost; the news-boy looks blue, and the school girls hurry along the sidewalks as if Jack Frost were after them. There is no doubting that we have crossed the threshold of the long New England winter, a season prolonged far into what the almanacs, with reckless disregard of truth, tell us is spring.

Is it a dreary season? Is it a dismal season? as Mr. Chadband would ask—or is it what Mr. Mark Tapley would call "jolly?" That depends entirely upon the point of view from which we regard it. To those who dwell in houses warmed with furnaces, whose thermometers indicate summer heat, whose drawing-rooms open into conservatories filled with flowers, whose double windows exclude northern blasts, whose feet tread on three-fold carpets, winter is not a dismal season. They dream of balls, of operas, of concerts, of a ceaseless round of gayeties and interchanged hospitalities, and winter is to them crowded with delights. To all who have warm firesides, good books, pleasant homes, there is no terror in the period of storms.

But the poor! Ah! here we have the dark side of the picture. Painfully subsisting even in the pleasant summer months, but then gladdened, in spite of their condition by the all-pervading sunshine that is tho'smile of God, when the period of wind and snow and ice arrives, how their hearts sink within them. With what anxiety they watch the changes of the sky. Alas! they need no thermometer to mark the temperature. The blood in their veins is their mercury. Their hopes rest on their more favored fellows. Equal in the eye of God, but unequal in their earthly lot, their appeal for aid should never be in vain. We should heed their moans in the pauses of the sportive dance; we should think of their sufferings in our warm counting-houses and drawing rooms; we should seek them out, not waiting to be sought, and volunteer the help that they require. Let us think, when the viewless hand of the wind is shaking our casements, how many a needy brother needs our aid to fence from the cold we feel not.

RELIGION AND INSANITY.—Miss Dix, the philanthropist, says, that among the hundreds of crazy people with whom her sacred missions have brought her into companionship, she has not found one individual, however fierce and turbulent, that could not be calmed by Scripture and prayer, uttered in low and gentle tones. The power of religious sentiments over these shattered souls seems miraculous.

CLUB PRICES OF OUR PAPER.—It will be observed that we give every *thirteenth* copy to those getting up clubs on our paper for the coming year. Last year we gave only the *seventeenth*. This makes quite a difference to the person who is getting up the club.

A SOLDIERLY ANSWER.—When Henry V., just before the battle of Agincourt, asked David Carn, who had been reconnoitering the French, how many there were, he replied: "Enough to fight, enough to kill, and enough to run away."

EARLY RISING.—If you want to be healthy and long-lived, get up betimes; but if you fancy that pallor and debility are more genteel, then by all means lie abed till about 10 A. M.

CHARITY.—The sum collected in New York for the sufferers by the French inundations, is $20,621 72.

A TRIAL.—A long rainy Sunday in the country is a sore trial to the patience of even a modern Job.

THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

Alexander II., the man who rules the mightiest empire on the face of the globe, and who influences to a greater or less degree the destiny of the Western power, is no such terrible ogre as fancy is apt to depict a Russian autocrat. He is tall, handsome and well shaped, with mild blue eyes and light hair, pleasant in society and affable in public—altogether quite a gentleman-like personage. His wife, to whom he is tenderly attached, is quite a model woman, so that his home is a happy one. Alexander is highly educated, being versed, not only in the languages and exact sciences, but in various literary accomplishments. He was trained with a view to fill the throne he occupies, and his father, who was a monomaniac on the subject of work, inured him to severe mental labor from an early age. But Alexander is naturally of a gay and festive disposition, and highly enjoys what little leisure he can, for a despot must work as hard as any of his subjects. His preferences have hitherto been in favor of France rather than England. He is reported to have said: "I hate the English, I pity the Germans, but I admire the French." If he is correctly reported, then there is a striking similarity of taste between him and Alexander I., who conceived a romantic friendship and entertained an enthusiastic admiration for Napoleon. At one time it seemed as if France and Russia would be fast friends and allies, but they came to loggerheads after all; and very likely Alexander II. and Napoleon III. will "agree to disagree," and the present peace prove nothing but an armistice. The petty sovereigns of western Europe must live in constant dread of this mighty autocrat of the North, whose shadow falls with a chilling weight from the Neva to the Rhine. Nobody knows how soon he may take to gobbling up little German principalities, and obliterating ten-by-six Grafs and Landgraves. It is quite as well not to have him for a very near neighbor.

A STRANGER.

If Quiz, a correspondent, did not write, and the New Orleans Picayune didn't print the following story, we should hardly believe it: "The district court in one of your northern parishes was in session—'twas the first day of court; time, after dinner. Lawyers and others had dined, and were sitting out before the hotel, and a long, lank, unsophisticated countryman came up and unceremoniously made himself one of 'em, and remarked: 'Gentlemen, I wish you would go on with this court, for I want to go home—I left Betsy a looking out.' 'Ah!' said one of the lawyers; 'and pray, sir, what detains you at court?' 'Why, sir,' said the countryman, 'I'm fotched here as a *jury*, and they say if I go home they will have to *find* me, and they mounn't do that as I live a good piece.' 'What jury are you on?' asked a lawyer. 'What jury?' 'Yes, what jury? Grand or traverse jury?' 'Grand or travis jury?—dad-fetched if I know.' 'Well,' said the lawyer, 'did the judge charge you?' 'Well, squire,' said he, 'that little fellow that sits up in the pulpit and kinder bosses it over the crowd, gin us a talk, but don't know whether he *charged* anything or not.' The crowd broke up in a roar of laughter, and the sheriff called court"

NOW IS THE TIME!—Read the handsome prize offer which we publish to-day; make your arrangements early, and go to work at once to form clubs. Our new volume of *The Flag of our Union* is to be the best we have ever issued. Several popular and favorite new contributors have been already engaged for the year, and we shall spare no time or money in perfecting this favorite miscellaneous paper. As all these prizes will be paid in *gold dollars*, there can be no doubt as to the intrinsic value to the winner. *Now is the time!*

NEWS FOR THE INDIANS.—A fleet of thirty metallic boats are now being built to enable the United States troops to penetrate the everglades of Florida in their operations against the Indians this winter. They are twenty-two feet long, three feet six inches broad, and have lockers at each end for ammunition and provisions. We don't mean to make a long job of this Florida war—we can't afford it.

WHAT NEXT?—In France the women shave, play on the fiddle, saw and plane, drive the plough, are sometimes harnessed to it, dance on the tight rope, keep shooting-galleries, measure gentlemen for boots, and do a variety of other feminine "chores," the particulars of which are mentioned in the "small bills" they present for their services.

"DON'T HURRY, HAGGINS."—This is a proverbial phrase in Kentucky, and originated from the fact that in a promissory note given by an "old settler," there was the following clause: "And it is expressly understood, that in the payment of said note, said Haggins is not to be hurried."

HOW TO MAKE A NOISE.—If you are desirous of making a noise and rising rapidly in the world, engage to work in a powder mill, and never think of entering it without a cigar in your mouth and hob-nailed shoes on your feet. You will be astonished at the result.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL.—We cheerfully send a sample copy of Ballou's Pictorial to any one who desires it without charge. Address us a line and it will be sent to you by return of mail.

VILLANY AND VIRTUE.—Lacon tells us: "Villany that is vigilant will be an overmatch for Virtue if she slumber on her post."

TO EVERYBODY!—Read our prize offer on another page of this paper, and then act accordingly.

TIME.—How much there is in one minute when we reflect that one minute extends all over the world.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

Englishmen are said, by their countrymen, to be over-fed and over-petted.

Wallace says that Washington was in all things admirable and to be imitated.

It is said that gambling is carried on secretly at Hartford, Conn.

Silver coin is excessively scarce all over the continent of Europe.

M. Desplace, the friend of Lamartine, was recently feasted in Montreal.

There is nothing in the world like the city of Moscow, but itself.

There are in New York city 290 booksellers and 68 book-binders—perhaps more.

Wm. Roderick Lawrence, an esteemed correspondent of our paper, is dead.

Bayard Taylor will make the tour of the globe before he comes back.

There are two things a man never forgots—his first love and first cigar.

The pope of Rome is said to be the only man who always dines alone.

The leaves of the beech, collected in autumn, make an admirable bed.

Mr. McConnell, of Sangamon county, Illinois, has a flock of 3,000 merino sheep.

Mr. Chase, recently murdered in Swanzey, Mass., was killed for thirty dollars.

Forsyth, the inventor of the percussion lock for fire arms, was a clergyman.

There is a man on the Western Reserve, Ohio, who is completely ossified.

Dr. J. H. Warren successfully uses cocoanut oil in pulmonary complaints.

There are 100 tons of ladies' hair pins manufactured annually in this country.

Ten States celebrated the 20th of last month as Thanksgiving day.

The centre of gravity has been defined to be a meeting of Friends—vulgarly Quakers.

A man died lately of the bite of a spider, making two killed thus, recently.

A man courts his wife before marriage, but she must court him afterwards.

Butter in sealed jars, packed in boxes of salt, will keep a long time.

Mademoiselle Rachel, the actress, has gone to Cairo for her health.

Poor people only live in hope—the rich live in fear.

AMERICAN BEAUTY.

The beauty of American women may fairly be said to throw down the gauntlet to the world, not excluding Circassia and Persia from the challenge. A beautiful American girl in her teens need not fear to stand side by side with the loveliest houri of the Caucasus. The intelligence beaming from her eyes would shame the soulless expression of the Oriental charmer. A German traveller once remarked of our ladies: "One might compare their beauty to that of an elegantly turned period, in which you cannot alter one word without destroying the whole sentence; or, to use a more correct simile, to a finished piece of poetry, which, by the alteration of a single syllable, degenerates into prose." Our ladies should take care, by using proper exercise, to prolong the reign of their charms, and refute the charge that their beauty is as fleeting as it is peerless.

THE "HUMORS OF FALCONBRIDGE."—T. P. Peterson has in press an illustrated volume of sketches under this title, consisting of a selection from the popular and humorous writings of the lamented Jonathan F. Kelly—"Falconbridge,"—and published for the benefit of his widow. Kelly was a "fellow of infinite jest," and many of these sketches, over which thousands have laughed, appeared in *The Flag of our Union*—so that we take a particular interest in the work. We sincerely trust that Mrs. Kelly will reap a handsome sum from the publication.

THE BALANCE OF EUROPE.—This is a favorite theme with the statesmen of Europe. Two intoxicated members of the British parliament were discussing it with each other lately. One said:

"Europe's true balance must not be o'erthrown."

To which the other replied:

"Hang Europe's balance—try to keep your own."

A QUEER IDEA.—One of our most distinguished and eloquent lawyers, while entering his cold bed on a sharp night, lately, was overheard to say to himself: "Well, of all things of getting a living, the worst a man could follow would be going about town in such nights as this and getting into bed for folks."

FRANKLIN.—Tuckerman says, "the example of Franklin is invaluable as a triumph of self-culture." So it is—and every young man ought to read his life, to see how he acquired his stores of information and cultivated his powerful and comprehensive intellect.

OF COURSE.—If one asks a question, and another replies, which is the oddest fellow? *The queerest* (Querist). We didn't make that—the man who did deserves to have his head shaved and carry a blue cotton umbrella.

GOSSIP.—Naturalists have observed that the squirrel is constantly chatting with his fellows. He is certainly a *great tail*-bearer, and of course the gossip of the woods.

ELOQUENCE OF SILENCE.—Fisher Ames, in his eulogy on Washington, speaks of the "silence that *rings* in deep caverns before the explosion of the earthquake."

GRAVITY AND GRAVITATION.—"When I've drunk five glasses," said a tipsy schoolmaster, "my gravity vanishes, and my gravitation begins to operate."

A CHANGE.—It is said that Lola Montes has sold her jewels and become deeply interested in religious subjects. We trust this is true.

THE TIMES.—One of the precepts recognized by Young America, male and female, is "Parents obey your children."

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL
DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"Mabel, the Rector's Ward: or, Truth and Treason in 1777." A Revolutionary romance of love and loyalty. By Major Henry Pursley Foord.
"Tempora Mutant," verses by James F. Fitts.
"The Quarrel and the Crown," a story by Frances P. Pepperell.
"Sonnet," by Mary Corinna Clair.
"Ashmedai," a tale by William B. Oliver.
"Boscili," a passage in the life of Haydn, by Ralph Tryon.
"The Virgin of Van Dyck," a story by Ellen Earnst.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Emblematical representation of the State of Kentucky. One of Billings's suggestive designs.
A series of interesting pictures, illustrating European agriculture; giving, first, Harvesting in Normandy; second, Apple-gathering in Normandy; third, Woodcutters and Carriers in Normandy; fourth, a Tyrolese Peasant at Vintage Time; fifth, Method of Wine-Making at Pola in Istria; and, sixth, Egg-Marketing in Ireland.
A splendid and highly characteristic two page picture, giving, in the best style of Billings's pencil, and Andrew's graver, a truthful view of the grounds, the horses, and the concourse of spectators at the great Horse Exhibition during the late Agricultural Fair in Boston.
Portrait of William W. Clapp, Esq., the popular and esteemed editor of the Boston Saturday Evening Gazette.
View of the College of Nobles at Moscow, Russia.
A fine representation of the U. S. Steamship Merrimac.

*** The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

☞ One copy of The Flag, and one copy of the Pictorial, when taken together, for $4 00 per annum.

Foreign Items.

Russia is forty-one times the size of France, and one hundred and thirty-eight times that of England.

The library of the British Museum contains 450,000 volumes, placed on shelves which occupy fifteen miles of space in length.

It is said that 100,000 passengers were conveyed by railway from St. Petersburg to Moscow between the middle of August and the middle of September.

A new life of Columbus, in two volumes, by Roselly de Lorgues, compiled from original and hitherto unused documents in Italy and France, is announced.

The Royal Geographical Society of England have voted their gold medal to Dr. Kane, for discoveries in his recent Arctic explorations after Sir John Franklin.

The Ticinese Gazette states that during the first six months of the present year 1756 Swiss have emigrated to the United States, including 454 Bernese, and 306 from the Grisons.

A wrought iron cannon has been manufactured in Liverpool, England, which weighs twenty-two tons, and sends a ball of three hundred pounds weight a distance of four miles.

Hogan, the Irish sculptor, has sent his statue of O'Connell, to be erected in the City of the Violated Treaty, to be cast in bronze at Paris. It will be placed on an excellent site in Limerick.

The increase of the working classes in Paris for the last five years is said to be very great, and now that there are no public works, the government will find it difficult to dispose of them.

The following is the result of the census of the Russian Empire, taken by order of the emperor at the time of his accession to the throne: The total number of the population amounts to 63,000,000.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

Some men live as if they were poor all their lives, to be wealthy when they die.

The man who is without an idea has generally the greatest idea of himself.

We tell our triumphs to the crowd, but our own hearts are the sole confidants of our sorrows.

A fool in an elevated position is like a man in a balloon—everybody appears little to him, and he appears little to everybody.

It is not wisdom but ignorance which teaches men presumption. Genius may sometimes arrogant, but nothing is so diffident as knowledge.

The homeliest females in the world may render herself more attractive by the exhibition of delicacy and refinement than the prettiest vulgarian that ever smiled.

An Athenian, who was lame on one foot, joining the army, was laughed at by the soldiery on account of his lameness. "I am here to fight," said he, "not to run."

Fools discover that frailty is not incompatible with great men; they wonder and despise; but the discovery that greatness is not incompatible with frailty, and they admire and indulge.

As the child is propelled in a perambulator, so is merit pushed on by ambition—it all depends upon how he is guided, as to whether it carries the person safe home, or else drops him in the mud half way.

Never consider that vanity an offence which limits itself to wishing for the praise of good men for good actions; next to our own esteem, it is a virtue to desire the esteem of others. We may covet general admiration for a bad action, but one can expect general esteem only for a good one.

Joker's Budget.

Lengthened sweetness long drawn out—a girl seven feet high.

Happiness is a pig with a greasy tale, which every one runs after, but nobody can hold.

What do not people ask editors? Somebody inquires of the Cincinnati Gazette whether there is any danger in eating butter made from the milk of a mad cow?

A country lecturer, some years since, thus described part of his apparatus: "Now, gentlemen, this here vessel is full of air, and that 'ere vessel is full of vacuum."

We have heard of an economical man who always takes his meals in front of a mirror; he does this to double the dishes. If that isn't philosophy, we would like to know what is.

Countryman—I say, mister, do you know where Mr. Smith lives? *Gent.*—Which of 'em? there is a good many of that name. *Countryman*—Yes, I know that, but this one's name is John.

There was melancholy humor in the proposal, by an Irish member, to make suicide punishable with death; but it appears that in England an attempt at suicide is a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment.

"Is there anything really the matter with you?" said a physician to a person who had sent for him. "I don't know how it is," was the reply. "Well," said the doctor, "I'll give you something to take away all that."

A girl who had become tired of single blessedness, thus wrote to her intended: "Dear Jim, come and take off your cumbrous self to Edward Kelderman is insistin' that I shall have him, and he hugs and kisses me so continually that I can't hold out much longer."

One of the certificates of death, written by a "physician of large practice," received at the city inspector's office, reads as follows: "Mrs. Karolyne Johnsons dawther aged five months and six days died with deficiency of life to-day under my attendance."

Quill and Scissors.

There is a manufactory in Philadelphia where paper bags are made by steam. There are six machines in operation, producing an average of sixty thousand bags per day, of sizes to contain quantities averaging perhaps from one to twenty-five pounds. There is an apparatus also for speeding and cutting the paper the required width, and a press for cutting the bags after they are manufactured.

The Indianapolis Journal states that the amount of freight scattered along the Bellefontaine Railroad, and switched off at way places, is almost incredible. At Indianapolis the freight trains cannot get nearer the Union depot than seven miles. One night, lately, a train came in consisting of forty-two cars, loaded with goods for the Western market.

Matters threaten to become very serious in Spain. Trustworthy accounts from Madrid of the 20th are to the effect that the question of a change of dynasty was now openly discussed, not merely by the populace, but among the better classes, who are represented to be in a state of great alarm.

There is no doubt that numbers of drowned men found floating in the river at St. Louis a short time ago, were drugged, robbed and thrown overboard by a Spaniard who kept a boarding house on the levee for boatmen. The bodies found were generally those of deck hands on steamers.

Mr. A. C. Stoddard of Boston has presented to Williams College two Egyptian mummies of the time of the Pharaohs, in an excellent state of preservation. Also a mummy crocodile, an animal which the ancient Egyptians worshipped, and two columns from the Giant's Causeway in Ireland.

Mormonism appears to be in bad odor in Jamaica. We learn from the Kingston Journal that about three years ago, a Mormon mission was sent to the island from the United States, but met with so inhospitable a reception that the missionaries were hissed and hooted from the place.

Mr. Clow, the mayor of Lavacca, Texas, as soon as he was elected, pulled off his coat and rolled up his sleeves, and went to work repairing one of the bridges of the town, which was so dilapidated as to interfere with travel and transportation.

The editor of the Richmond Whig has been shown several beautiful white silk handkerchiefs, made by two young ladies of Rappahannock county, Va., Misses Willis, from the product of silk worms fed by themselves.

An Ohio vine grower writes to the Journal of Commerce that there are now devoted to vineyard culture over 4000 acres in the Ohio valley, about one half of which quantity is in the vicinity of Cincinnati.

The Russian government intend to make Sebastopol a magnificent city. A letter from Constantinople says the attempt made to get up the fragments of the vessel sunk at the mouth of the harbor appears likely to prove successful.

Martin F. Tupper, of England, has given a gold medal for the encouragement of Liberian literature, to be awarded to the author of the best essay on "The Future of Africa." All competitors must be Liberian citizens.

Superior City, the new centre of population and trade, at the western extremity of Lake Superior, is said to be prospering finely. Last year it had but four hundred inhabitants—now it has a thousand.

A sleep-walker, named Mrs. Mary Connor, walked from a two-story window in Woonsocket one night, lately, and broke both ankles. She thought herself assisting to catch a flock of sheep.

Bayard Taylor's new route of travel is—through Sweden, Norway and Denmark, through Russia, then on to Siberia, and down the Amoor River, returning to New York via California.

The Supreme Court has recently decided a suit in favor of Mesick vs. Sunderland, by which the former gets a title to one-third of the city of Sacramento, worth $3,000,000.

Gen. Ph. St. G. Cooke has given $20,000 as a contribution to a fund for maintaining an agricultural school in connection with the University of Virginia.

Mr. George Poore, of Rowley, Mass., lately shot a white-headed American eagle, measuring, from tip to tip, six feet.

Near Marysville, Cal., a pumpkin has been raised which weighed over two hundred pounds, and girths seven feet four inches.

Mrs. Thorne, of Palo Alto, Mich., lately hung herself and child because her husband refused to take her to a ball.

The Chinese sugar cane, readily grown even in the North, promises to add to the value of our products.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Miner, Mr. George M. Baker to Miss Emily F. Boies.
By Rev. Dr. Gannett, Mr. L. B. Wilber to Miss Lottie A. Cooper, both of Foxboro'.
By Rev. Mr. Richards, Mr. Solon A. Whitcomb to Miss Jenny Sawyer.
By Rev. Dr. Kirk, Mr. Andrew S. March to Miss Susan B. Hutchins.
By Rev. Dr. Lothrop, Mr. Daniel Cooley to Miss Sarah Hill, of West Cambridge.
By Rev. Dr. Burrett, Mr. William Webster Lawrence to Miss Judith C. Smith, of Cambridge.
At East Boston, by Rev. Mr. Clark, Mr. Cushing Barnes to Miss Eliza A. Robinson.
At Charlestown, by Rev. Mr. Lambert, Mr. James Bolston to Miss Catharine Farmer.
At Dorchester, by Rev. Mr. Hall, John Phillips, Esq., of Mobile, Ala., to Mrs. Ann Jane Gardner.
At West Cambridge, by Rev. Mr. Swain, Mr. Stephen F. Blake to Miss Abby T. Wood.
At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Ellis, Mr. Charles H. Fifield to Miss Caroline A. Robinson.
At Beverly, by Rev. Mr. Foster, Mr. Michael Whitehouse to Miss Abby Benson.
At Rowe, by Rev. Mr. Prince, Mr. Wm. M. Burnham to Miss Mary Ann Amablo.
At Newburyport, by Rev. Mr. Smith, Mr. Hiram Young to Miss Ann Maria Howard.
At New Bedford, by Rev. Mr. Orrell, Mr. John Brightman to Miss Hannah Read.
At Pepperell, by Rev. Mr. Smith, Mr. Henry W. Burgess to Miss Sarah E. Gardner, both of Charlestown.

Deaths.

In this city, Mr. Joseph Mitchell, 45; Mrs. Lois Weeks Todd, 40; Mr. William Campbell, 43, Mrs Mary McKeon, 30; Widow Elizabeth Bankier, 53; Mr. Joseph Sewell, 90; Miss Pamelia Scudder Gifford, 30.
At Roxbury, Mrs. Margarette B. Chorley, 56.
At Jamaica Plain, Mr. James H. Foster, Jr., 52.
At Newton, Samuel Hyde, Esq., 82.
At South Malden, Mr. William Baldwin, 43.
At Dedham, Mrs. Rebecca, widow of the late Rev. Dr. Chester, of Albany.
At Needham, Mrs. Sally J. Eaton, 63.
At Salem, Mr. Seth Barrier, 40.
At Beverly, Mrs. Abigail, widow of the late Mr. Israel Lovett, 93.
At Gloucester, Mrs. Sarah Rogers, 66.
At Newburyport, Mr. William H. Hynes, 31; Mr. William H. Older, 58; Capt. Moses Emery, 83.
At Groveland, Mr. William H. Fowler, 33.
At Shrewsbury, Widow Sylvia Stowe, 78.
At Worcester, Rev. N. T. Bent, 46.
At Leominster, Mr. Joseph Burrage, 66.
At Scituate, Mrs. Elizabeth Litchfield, 82.
At New Bedford, Widow Hannah S. Perry, 68.
At Fall River, Mrs. Sarah C. Davis, 26; Mrs. Almira Borden, 50.
At Leicester, Widow Persis Earle, 88.
At Edgartown, Mr. Charles Francis, 46; Mr. Ralph Cleaveland, 66.
At Nantucket, Mr. George Ruberg, 62.
At North Stonington, Ct., Mr. Jabez B. Maine, 81.
At Gorham, Me., Widow Mary Colburn, 76.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

TO "LOUD."

BY DARK BYRD.

Yes, 'twould be, O so sweet to be
At rest, and from all trouble free,
To know our sorrows all were o'er,
And we had met to part no more;
To part no more! Ah, it would be
A heaven to dwell alone with thee.

And now, when gloomy thoughts arise,
And burning tear-drops dim my eyes,
I'll seek relief in fervent prayer,
That we may know each other there.
And then our joy will be more dear,
That we have wept and sorrowed here.

Though darkest clouds obscure the way,
I'll onward press—'twill soon be day;
For in the east faint streaks appear,
That tell us that the dawn is near;
That beaming star will guide the way
That led to where the Infant lay.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

HAUNTED SHIPS.

BY FREDERICK W. SAUNDERS.

"I TELL you it aint no use trying to laugh it off and explain the matter by saying that there is no earthly reason why one ship should be more unlucky than another in the long run, and that everything depends on the officers and crew, —'twont do. If reason says that, experience shows the contrary," exclaimed Jack Brace, vehemently, bringing his paw down upon the table with a force that made the bottles and glasses dance again, and went a long way towards convincing his auditors. "Just look at the case of that down-east schooner, that happened only two or three years ago," he continued. "There she was, a bran new craft, just off the stocks, put together in the best manner, without regard to expense, and as pretty a model as ever slid from the ways. Her captain, who had been waiting some time for her to be completed, was as smart a young fellow and as good a sailor as ever straddled a gangway; her crew were all picked men, and everything was done for her that experience could suggest or money buy. Now you chaps, who talk so much about your reason and your philosophy, would have thought a man a fool who should have predicted that she would be one of the unluckiest crafts that ever floated; and that, without being cast away, she would never complete a single voyage. And yet, how was the case? She took her cargo aboard at some port in the State of Maine, and started for Philadelphia. When a week out, she put into Boston, where she had no business to be, as it was a long way out of her course. No sooner was her anchor down than every man-Jack aboard of her tumbled his traps into the boat and came ashore; and the captain notified the owners that they must find some one else to take charge of her, as neither himself nor his crew could be hired for any money to put foot on her deck again. The owners were, very naturally, surprised and indignant. Another crew was immediately put aboard, so that she hove up anchor and went to sea the same afternoon, and not the slightest doubt entered the head of any one that she would continue the voyage. What, then, was the surprise of the owners upon hearing next morning that the schooner lay at anchor at Nantasket Roads with not a soul on board!

"The captain and mate soon made their appearance at the owners' office, looking very glum and thoughtful. They reported that, having run about half the distance between Boston light and Race Point by twelve at night, they had concluded to put back. They were very sorry, they said, to disappoint the owners, but they didn't like the craft, and would prefer not to go in her. The crew were closely questioned, but they only shook their heads, looked at each other, and said they didn't fancy the schooner; nothing further could be got from them by any amount of questioning. There was a great deal of difficulty in procuring another crew; captains and mates were plenty enough, but the story had got about among the men in port that the vessel was queer, and they could not be persuaded to go in her. As a last resort, a complete crew, officers and men, were shipped in New York without being informed of the circumstances, sent to Boston and hurried on board.

"This time the experiment was successful, the schooner was got round to Philadelphia; but no sooner was she made fast alongside the wharf than all hands left her, hot foot. The cargo was taken out, and the return freight put on board; but that was as far as they could go; the story had been carried to all the principal ports, and chaps were shy of her. In this condition she lay a month, and shippers began to grumble at their freight being delayed, when, by an offer of double wages, a set of roughs were engaged and sent down from York. They were a precious set of highbinders, fresh from the slave trade, or worse. Their captain was every inch a scamp; and take them altogether, you would not be inclined to dispute their assertion that they were a match for 'the world, the flesh, and the old fellow himself.' Well, these fellows were put on board, and with the help of an unlimited amount of corn whiskey, and no end of hard swearing, the schooner was worked down the Delaware and off the coast, on her way to Portland.

"Five days from that time she was picked up adrift in Massachusetts Bay, and towed into Boston—the men having left in the boat and gone ashore, bag and baggage, when off Provincetown. She laid at Boston something like a year, was sold and unsold a dozen times, each owner trying his best to make something of her, but she cost more than she come to, and burned the fingers of every one who had anything to do with her, until at length some one having got possession of her for a mere song, he wisely broke her up and sold the material.

"Now how does that jibe?" continued Jack Brace, with a triumphant glance around the table. "How does that jibe with your talk about the impossibility of there being any such thing as good or ill luck sticking by a craft as long as she floated?"

"Is all that yarn true?" asked Joe Grummet, puffing a cloud of tobacco smoke into Jack's face.

"Every word of it. I have got two or three Boston papers in my chest that make mention of some of the circumstances; not in full, of coarse, for the owners would try to hush it up, so as not to give the vessel a bad name, but enough to show that I'm not blowing a false breeze. I got the particulars from a couple of shipmates who sailed in the schooner at different times."

"And what did they say was the trouble with her?"

"That's the worst of it—nobody ever found out what was the matter; the chaps didn't seem to like to talk about it. If you questioned them they would look grave and try to turn the conversation; if you pressed them, they would say 'nothing was the matter, nothing at all, only they didn't like to sail in her.' 'Twas the same way with all the different crews, nobody could ever get anything more out of them; and I reckon that to this day no one but themselves know what the real difficulty was. Now what d'ye think of that?"

"Why," said Joe, placing a quart pewter mug to his lips, and gazing attentively at the ceiling overhead for several minutes, while the "Adam's apple" in his brawny throat bobbed up and down, keeping time to a muffled thump, thump, thumping, that was going on somewhere in his internal economy; "why, the fact is, Jack Brace, you've wandered away from your text most consumedly. You began about ships being unlucky, and I said as how the greater part of this ill luck, if called by its right name, would be logged as incompetency of officers. Whereupon you right away heaves in stays, comes round on the other tack, and spreads yourself on a stupid twister about a haunted schooner. Now that's a different thing. If you come to talk about a ship being troubled with spooks, and galloblins, and queers, I shall agree with you right off the reel, because I've been shipmates with that sort of thing myself."

"Now, Joe," said Tom Pipes, who had hitherto kept his nose in his porter pot, and a profound silence generally, "can you say, on your honor as a shell-back, that you was ever shipmates with a regular double and twisted, right up and down spook?—none of your half and half affairs that can be explained away, but a real, no mistake queer, such as we read about?"

"Yes, I can," said Joe, thumping his pot on the table to attract the attention of the bar maid. "Did you ever know the Gil Blas of Liverpool, a regular old fashion built ship, with a quarter gallery and to'gallant poop, such as you don't see now-a-days, except in pictures?"

"Never saw her," said Jack Brace.

"Nor me, too," echoed Pipes.

"Well," resumed Joe, "if you never saw her, it's pretty certain you never will, for she's among the bygones now. Well, in the year '32 I was one of the crew of the ship Dashaway, that went ashore and was hogged on the back side of Cape Cod. She went ashore in light weather, so that there wasn't much difficulty in getting her off; but she was condemned upon, being overhauled by the underwriters, so of course the crew went adrift, and myself, with most of the rest, made our way to Boston—the same town that figures in your lie about the haunted schooner."

"'Tisn't any lie!" exclaimed Jack Brace, springing from his chair, and thumping the table with his fist; "it's gospel truth, every word. I can show you the papers I spoke about, and bring people to prove every—"

"Well, well," drawled Joe, in a conciliating tone; "say your sermon about the schooner, then, if that suits you better; but to tell you the truth, Jack, I only believe the schooner story to accommodate you; so take warning and don't spin another such a twister to-night, for I could not hoist in more than one such yarn in a day, and promise to believe it, even to please my best friend."

"Well, go in—go in, lemons," said Jack, recovering his temper and his seat, with a tip of the porter pot and a bend of the knees; "go on with your yarn; but mind, if I catch you spreading yourself too strong, I'll just take and—"

"Dry up!" said Joe, authoritatively; "you've blowed your gale, now give me a chance." Well, as I was saying, Boston being the nearest port, we drifted round there. As we passed up the harbor I noticed the Gil Blas, laying with her anchor hove short, apparently all ready for a pilot. She was a well-looking craft enough, of about eight hundred tons, and except for her old fashioned build and rig, there was nothing to make a sailor man give the second look at her. Arrived at the city, the rest of the boys, who had never been at Boston before, followed me round to my old boarding place at the foot of Hanover Street, where I found a number of old shipmates laying on their oars, waiting for a chance to turn up. I should have liked well enough to stop ashore and cruise about the town a bit, but having lost my ship, there were of course no wages coming to me, so there was nothing for it but to get afloat again as soon as possible. The next morning after our arrival, as we were all sitting in the bar room, smoking and spinning amusing little lies to each other, the door comes open with a bang, and in rushes the shipping-office runner in a deuce of a hurry, with 'Hurrah, boys! who's for Canton?'

"'I am!' says I, as smart as a cricket.

"'And I, and I,' sung out all the rest.

"'That's right,' says the runner; 'how many are there of you?'

"'Fifteen,' says Jack Rollock, counting noses.

"'Fifteen, eh? Well, I shall want five more, besides a cook and steward; so while I run round into Ann Street and hunt 'em up, you'd best go down to the office and sign; and I say, boys, get your traps all ready to go aboard this afternoon, for they want to get to sea to-night, d'ye understand?'

"'All right,' says Jack; 'but what's the name of the craft, anyway?'

"'The Gil Blas,' replied the runner. And he passed out of the door and down the street as quick as he'd come.

"'The Gil Blas, is it?' echoed Jack Rollock, stretching himself out on the bench again, where he had been comfortably snoozing when the shipping agent made his appearance. 'Well, then, if it's the Gil Blas, you may strike a hump on my back as big as the rock of Gibraltar if I ever set foot on her deck, anyway.'

"'Why, what's the matter with the craft, Jack?' I asked.

"'Well, she's queer; that's what's the matter with her. There's more aboard of her than what's put down on the manifest, or gets wages either.'

"'Pooh—nonsense; it's only a sailor's yarn.'

"'Well, then, if it's only a sailor's yarn, there are better men than you and me in this town—men with long tails swinging abaft their starns—who think the same thing, let me tell you. You wouldn't suppose the Lloyds, or the board of underwriters in this here town of Boston, could be led away by a sailor's yarn, as you call it, do you? You needn't answer, because I know you are a man of sense. Well, now let me give you a little pocket geography of this here same homely-looking scow of a Gil Blas. Well, then, in the first place, you must know, she's lost her spars no end of times; but as she's an old craft, that's not to be wondered at. That's not the worst of it, however: from the time she was launched until this day, she never took a cargo that she didn't wet, sweat, or damage in some way, so that the underwriters had to lose a good proportion of what she and her cargo were worth—d'ye mind that? Well, she kept on that way, from bad to worse, rating lower and lower at the offices every voyage, until this time they refused to insure her at any price, which of course prevented her going to sea. To get rid of this difficulty, the owners had her hauled on to the railway and thoroughly examined. Her bottom was found to be as sound as a nut, and after a good many hems and haws, they finally managed to get her insured at high rates, in small sums distributed all over the country. Her cargo was then put aboard, and she now only waits for a crew; and I reckon she'll have to wait, for I'm blowed if I go in her anyway you you can fix it.'

"'Nor I, nor I,' echoed all the rest. And as no one was going, I backed out also.

"The runner was naturally a little cut up to find we had disappointed him. But he was nobody. Sailors were scarce at that time, and it stood him in hand to be precious civil, or he might have got licked.

"There were no other chances offering that day, and we passed the time sozzling about the house until about ten o'clock in the evening, and had just begun to think of turning in, when in rushed the shipping agent again under a full press of canvass.

"'Hurrah, lads!' he shouted. "Look alive now, and get your traps together. There's a ship lying in Nantasket Roads, bound for Canton. They've just worked her round from Bath with lumpers and riggers, and want a crew straight, so's to get to sea to-night. Show yourselves spry now, for there's a pilot boat waiting at Long Wharf to take you aboard free gratis for nothing.'

"'What's her name?' chorused all hands.

"'The Arethusa—bran new ship—eighteen dollars a month—soft tack twenty-one times a week—the captain's an angel and the mate a saint; ask him to give you a chaw of tobacco and he'll knock you down with a pound. Look alive, boys—look alive!'

"We required no urging: getting to sea being the thing of all others we most desired. A string of drays having drawn up in front of the door, our chests, bags and hammocks were piled upon them, and off they started, followed by our tribe in 'open order,' occasioned by our fellows, in squads of two and three, dropping in at the numerous chain-lockers along the route, to take a parting smile with their shore acquaintances, from which places of 'entertainment for man and beast'—especially beast—they were quickly dislodged by the runner and boarding master, who followed close astern, as whippers-in. Arrived at the wharf, we were joined by another gang, which completed the crew. Tumbling ourselves and our traps aboard the boat, the sails were hoisted, and with a stiff breeze we rattled down the harbor in fine style. Passing Boston light, there sure enough was the ship, just outside of Point Alderton. We couldn't see much of her, however, for the night was as dark as it ever was in the middle of the dark ages.

"'Man the windlass—heave up!' was the order, as we swarmed up the gangway, fore and main chains. The breaks were shipped, and as the ship was no great distance from the bottom, the anchor was soon fished and catted, the topsails and to'gallant sails dropped, sheeted home and hoisted up, the fore and main tacks boarded, and with a stiff, leading breeze we laid our course east and by south for the Atlantic Ocean. Our crew, for a wonder, chanced to be all sailors, and took to their work with such a will that by two bells in the mid-watch all sail was made, everything lashed, and the decks cleared up, so that the watches were chosen at once, and the starboard watch, to which I belonged, sent below. When we were called at four o'clock to take our trick on deck, Jack Rollock bounced into the forecastle, looking as wild as a petrel.

"'Well, I'm jolly blasted, lads, if they haven't tacked it to us snug, you may just take and shoot me, that's all.'

"'Why, what's the matter, Jack?' asked Tom Pipes, leisurely swinging himself out of his bunk.

"'Matter?—matter enough! What ship do you suppose you are aboard of?'

"'What ship?—why, the Arethusa, of course.'

"'The Arethusa be hanged! You just aint aboard of no Arethusa—no, ma'am, not by no manner of means you aint. You are aboard of the Gil Blas! twenty miles off the pitch of Cape Cod, with all sail set, and going through the drink at the rate of ten knots—that's where you are. I thought rather queer about those quarter galleries last night, but didn't take much notice of 'em till just in the gray of the morning, when happening to poke my skillet over the head-rails, what should I see on the head-boards but the words 'GIL BLAS,' with a homely-looking, no sailor spanyard for a figure-head? The chaps on deck are mighty wicked about it, and I shouldn't wonder if we had a jolly row before soon.'

"We slipped into our duds in a hurry, and going on deck, found the other watch clustered about the fore hatch, holding an animated confabulation upon the propriety of knocking off work and compelling the captain to take the ship back to port. We joined the council, which was getting to be somewhat uproarous, when we heard the voice of the mate from the poop, ordering the watch aft to pump ship. No one paid the slightest attention to the command. Presently it was repeated, with a like result. The mate becoming enraged, seized a belaying pin from the rail and sprang forward.

"'I'll teach you to disobey orders,' he roared, making for Jack Rollock. 'Lay aft here, you lazy, lousy, sculking scalawag!' And he raised the heavy pin to strike him.

"'Say, just look a-here, my slight acquaintance,' said Jack, fetching him a tremendous clip on top of the nose, which spread him out on the deck as flat as a wet swab. "Put that in your pipe and smoke it, my fine fellow, till we decide whether the ship is going on her voyage or back to Nantasket.'

"The mate lay upon the deck quite motionless for a few minutes, then picking himself up he walked aft and entered the cabin, from which he shortly re-appeared in company with the captain and second mate, each armed with a revolver and cutlass. They did not come forward, however, but walked the quarter-deck some minutes, evidently waiting for us to decide what course to pursue before they declared war, for although they possessed fire-arms, which we had not, still twenty-five or thirty stout men, each armed with a murderous-looking sheath-knife, was not an enemy to be sneezed at.

"The crew at first were almost unanimously in favor of returning to port at any risk, but a due consideration of the fact that if we did return we should have to pass several months in jail, besides going through the formality of a trial, if not worse; that our traps were now snug on board; that we had already done all the hard work incidental to getting under weigh; and that after all there was nothing very much out of the way with the old tub, decided us that upon the whole it would be about as well to make the passage in her, and desert at the first port. We had scarcely arrived at this conclusion when the captain walked forward to the waist and calmly addressed us:

"'Well, my men,' he said, carelessly fingering the lock of his pistol, 'what's to be the order of the day? Mutiny and a fight, with half a dozen killed and the rest in irons, or orders obeyed and a comfortable ship? Take your own choice—I'm ready for either.'

"'Why the way of it is just here, d'ye mind, Captain Ripripgger,' said Jack Rollock, advancing a step or two. 'Here we've been hired aboard this here vessel under false purtenses, and first along we had a cruel good mind to make you go back anyhow; but after palarvering the thing over a bit, we've concluded to make the passage in the old hearse, and risk it. But we've got to have good times aboard her—mind, I tell ye—watch and watch; good grub, and no calling men out of their names.'

"'Very well,' said Captain Ripripger, 'all you have got to do is just to be prompt to your duty. When men do that, they always have easy times with me. But there must be no more disobedience after this. If there's any extra fight in ye that you want to get rid of, now's your time. Hereafter, the first man that creates a disturbance will either go in irons or be shot, or I'm a Dutchman. Just behave yourselves like men and I'll treat you as men. The mate I believe is a little fiery; but I'll speak to him and see that he don't exceed his—'

"'O, never mind the mate, sir,' interrupted Jack. 'I see he's subject to fits; but if he has another attack, we'll doctor him like a sick kitten. Never fear but we'll take good care of him. You seem to talk about right yourself, sir, and I don't mind if I promise to stick by you like tar to a new coat; wont we, boys?'

"'Yes, of course we will,' responded the entire crew; for a sailor's heart is easily won, and man-fashion talk from a superior upsets him at once.

"'Very well, then,' replied the captain, evidently much satisfied at the result of his diplomacy. 'Let the watch below get their breakfast, and the rest of you lay aft and pump her out.'

"The order was obeyed with alacrity, and from that day we had no further trouble of that kind on board. Indeed, as far as making things pleasant and comfortable in a ship went, I think I never sailed with a better man than old Ripripger.

"We struck the trades in about a week after leaving port, and made a splendid run to the Cape of Good Hope, where we took a westerly gale, which took us to the parallel of St. Paul's and Amsterdam, when we hauled on a taut bowline for Java Head.

"We were already nine weeks out, and thus far all had gone on pleasantly and well. The mate turned out to be a good enough sort of fellow, when he found no one was afraid of him. The captain was a brick, and the superstitious fears that troubled the men at first had gradually died out for lack of nourishment.

"One bright moonlight night, when about a week's sail from the Straits of Sunda, we were all sitting upon the cover of the long boat, playing twenty-deck poker for plugs of tobacco. One of the men having been 'skun,' started forward for a fresh supply of material. He had scarcely been gone a minute, when back he came flying, his face as white as a plaster image, and his hands trembling as with a touch of the tremens, in which condition he stood staring at us, with his under jaw hanging down, and his eyes sticking out so that you might have hung your hat upon them.

"'Why, what in the name of Jackson has come to the man!' said Jack Rollock, fetching him a dig in the ribs. 'You look as if you had seen your grandmother's husband's wife's ghost. Why don't you speak up, booby? You know what it says in the primer—' hold up your head, speak loud and plain.' Now do it, and show that your edication has been some service to you.'

"Thus admonished, the man pointed forward, and in a hoarse whisper, ejaculated, 'There's a strange man on the fo'castle!'

"'Gas!' responded Jack, with an attempt at bravado, though evidently a little startled.

"'No 'taint gas neither. He's there; the foresail hides him now; but go and look under the foot of the sail and you'll see him plain enough.'

"Descending from our perch on the boat, we moved forward in a body until we could see under the foot of the sail; and there, sure enough, was the figure of a man, with a face as ghastly white as the garments he wore, and with immensely long red hair and whiskers. His clothes were stained in spots with what appeared to be blood. He did not appear to take the slightest notice of us at first, but continued to pace the to'gallant forecastle athwart ships, from side to side, with a slow and noiseless step. Presently he paused, and gazed fixedly upon us for several minutes while he pointed with his outstretched arm to the forecastle scuttle; then passing to leeward he descended, over the barrel of the windlass to the deck and with the same slow and noiseless tread moved aft under the lee of the galley.

"The moment he passed out of sight the men began to get rid of their astonishment and recover their courage. 'Here goes to find out what he's made of, anyhow,' said Jack Rollock, springing across the forecastle, and followed by half a dozen others. But although the figure was but a few steps in advance, it vanished suddenly and completely upon reaching the mainmast. 'Did he come this way?' asked Jack, rushing round the mast to windward.

"'Didn't see anything of him?' replied the man on the weather side.

"Jack looked round the deck, looked aloft, over the side, and even down the barrel of the pump; but without success.

"'Well, strike me wulgar if this aint queer,' he exclaimed, scratching his head in perplexity. 'I'm blowed, that's just what I be.'

"'What's the matter there, men?' asked the mate, coming forward to the break of the poop.

"'Matter! Why, there are more hands aboard than signed the articles at Boston. There's a strange man tramping about the decks—that's what's the matter, sir.'

"'You've seen it, then?' said the mate, glancing anxiously about the deck, with rather a wild look in his eyes.

"'Eh, what?' said Jack; 'then you have seen it, too?'

"'Yes—no. Well, as long as you have seen it, there can be no harm in telling you. Yes, I have seen it—we've known it aft here in the cabin for more than a month, but thought it best not to cause you unnecessary alarm by mentioning it. It's an awful thing boys, isn't it?' The pallid faces of the men before him was sufficient answer, and he proceeded: 'I suppose it is some one who has been murdered aboard here. I've heard of such things, but never believed them before. It's killing the captain. Don't you see how thin, and pale, and nervous he's getting? Nobody knows what I've suffered, waking up nights to find the infernal thing standing over my bunk, staring at me with its cold, dead eyes. But never mind, boys. Keep up a good heart; we'll be in port shortly," he continued, in a more cheerful tone, as he walked away aft.

"You can easily guess the subject of our conversation as we returned to our station in the waist. Every man had some story to relate as having some bearing upon the matter; but we were presently interrupted by an exclamation from one of the men. Turning our eyes toward the forecastle scuttle, we saw a human head slowly rising above the combings of the hatch. The face glowed and shone with a pale blue light, while ghastly, flickering flames darted in and out among his matted hair. With its long, bony arm the figure beckoned us forward, and pointed down the companion-way. Three times was this pantomime repeated, when the spectre vanished.

"Of course there was no going into the forecastle to sleep that night. I consider myself about as brave as the majority of men, but I will frankly own that no earthly consideration would have induced me to go down that companion-way alone. All hands stayed upon deck through the night. At about three bells in the mid-watch the captain came upon deck and walked forward to where we were sitting.

"'Hullo! what's all this?' he said. 'Why isn't the watch below?'

"'Can't go into *that* fo'castle no more,' replied Jack Rollock, with a dismal shake of the head.

"'Can't go into the fo'castle!—why not?'

"'*That's* down there—that thing, that—that spook, sir.'

"'The devil!' exclaimed the captain, with a gesture of impatience and vexation.

"'Yes, sir—precisely,' said Jack; 'that's just what I thought it was when I first saw it.'

"The captain made no reply, but walking aft, moodily paced the deck till morning. From that time the spectre was seen every night flitting about in different parts of the ship. No work was attempted beside trimming sail; everything that had to be done was done in couples—two men at the wheel, two on the lookout, two or more everywhere. No man would stay for an instant alone, and altogether we were about as dissatisfied a ship's company as you'd often find.

"Just one week from the first appearance of the thing among the hands forward, we made Java Head, early one bright Sunday morning. By the help of a strong fair wind we made such good headway up the Straits that shortly after dark the same evening we came to anchor off Anjier Point.

"No sooner was the anchor in the ground than the captain ordered away the starboard quarter boat, and with the second mate and the boat's crew started for the shore to order a lot of fresh provisions, to stand us till we reached Hong Kong. His quitting the ship seemed a signal for the most diabolical uproar that [illegible] heard aboard a vessel — groans, shrieks, screeches resounded from every part of the ship. The figure we had all so often seen in appearance at one minute on the forecastle next at the cabin door, without even the deck. Some of the men declared [illegible] hundreds of infernal images running [illegible] rigging, though that must have been [illegible] could see but one. At length the deep [illegible] a large gong from the very bowels of [illegible] put the finishing stroke to our courage. [illegible] one accord the men rushed to the rescue [illegible] and lowering it alongside, began hastily [illegible] their traps aboard. The mate begged [illegible] until we reached some other port, or at least [illegible] until the captain returned; but we [illegible] listen to him. 'Hold on, boys!' he cried [illegible] last one entered the boat and began to [illegible] 'If you are going, you might as well [illegible] along, for I'm blessed if I step on shore [illegible] for all India!'

"He was taken on board and the boat [illegible] off amid a howl of unearthly laughter [illegible] board.

"Upon reaching the landing, we [illegible] tain just preparing to come off. He [illegible] seem much surprised at our desertion, [illegible] us on board again at once. At this [illegible] general exclamation from the crew [illegible] turn my eyes toward the ship. A [illegible] was streaming from her cabin windows [illegible] instant and the flames shot up from [illegible] ways, enveloping the masts, sails and [illegible] one sheet of fire. In silence we gazed [illegible] and I can almost swear I saw the [illegible] spectre enter a boat on the side of the [illegible] thest from us, and pull away into the [illegible] She burned fiercely for about an hour, and the poet says:

"'She gave a heel to starboard, then to port
And going down head-foremost, sunk—to

And that was the last of the Gil Blas.

"'Is that all?' asked Jack Brace, as [illegible] ly filled his pipe and began smoking.

"'It's enough, aint it?'

"'Yes—too much; but did you never [illegible] anything more about the spook?'

"'Never.'

"'What did people say about it?'

"'Fudge,' mostly."

Jack ruminated several minutes in s[illegible]

"'You say the ship was insured, and [illegible] had a tremendous hard name?'

"'Well, then,' said Joe, 'if you m[illegible] all about it, people did say it was a pr[illegible] game to bring a ghost all the way fr[illegible] to put a scare on a whole ship's comp[illegible] if the captain and mate never had an[illegible] of the kind before, they certainly did [illegible] a first attempt. The owners got their [illegible] however, and it was the general op[illegible] they couldn't have got the old boat [illegible] hands in any better way, all things c[illegible] So now you've got the whole of the [illegible] are at liberty to make the most of it."

[Written for The Flag of our Union]

THE LITTLE L KITCH[illegible]

—OR,—

A NIGHT AT THE THE[illegible]

BY EMMA CARNA.

"How pleasant and cosy everything [illegible] half whispered Mrs. Eustice, as she [illegible] in his willow cradle and spread his li[illegible] patchwork quilt over him and tucked [illegible] sides; then leaning still lower, she to[illegible] lips to his plump little cheek, while [illegible] curls of the youthful mother swept for[illegible] for a moment hid the features of both [illegible] with all a mother's pride when she view[illegible] born, she whispered still louder, "O, I [illegible] mand would have to set Arthur's cunning [illegible] still clinging, even in his sleep, to that [illegible] brought him. Well, though I never [illegible] before any one, I can't help but feel [illegible] him, for he is the very image of Edmu[illegible] why don't husband come to tea? why [illegible] so long past his usual time of being he[illegible] Mrs. Eustice glanced around the room [illegible] air of satisfaction.

Everything was scrupulously neat. T[illegible] now, cane-seated chairs sat gracefu[illegible] the wall, and the lounge, which h[illegible] hands had covered, looked soft and [illegible] The tea table was spread with glitter[illegible] ware, and the dishes which were fille[illegible] ferent kinds of food, were each cover[illegible] snowy napkin, all in waiting for the lo[illegible] come. The wind whistled and raved a[illegible] new sides of the young wife's little parlo[illegible] as if it would fain find an entrance; [illegible] Eustice thought of the well filled coal [illegible] cellar, and heeded it not; her only ca[illegible] ent, was on account of her husband's [illegible] At length a footstep was heard near [illegible] door, and the wife sprang to open it, b[illegible] hand lifted the latch, it was quickly op[illegible] by the husband, but by Mrs. Crosby, [illegible] a wealthier neighbor. Mrs. Eustic[illegible] rather deeply, but she soon recovered [illegible] possession, and inviting her visitor to s[illegible] the large rocking-chair towards the fire [illegible] her be seated.

Mrs. Crosby, after commenting on th[illegible] and giving a scrutinising glance a[illegible] room, gathered the folds of her rustlin[illegible] silk in her hands, sank back in the [illegible] chair rather abruptly with:

"Well, did you upholster this?"

"I did," said Ellen Eustice, with [illegible] blush, not knowing whether her guest [illegible] to compliment her skill, or make sport [illegible] temps to make articles more comfort[illegible] cheap a way.

"I declare," continued the neighbo[illegible] house depended on my skill for low[illegible] easy chairs, I guess it would be rather [illegible] furniture. I always think the time sp[illegible] such articles is lost, for they are only he[illegible] after all, and you can buy new fur[illegible] cheap."

Ellen's previous happy spirits all vani[illegible] and to conceal her depression she lea[illegible]

for the most diabolical uproar that was ever heard aboard a vessel — groans, shrieks and screeches resounded from every part of the ship. The figure we had all so often seen made its appearance at one minute on the forecastle, and the next at the cabin door, without ever crossing the deck. Some of the men declared they saw hundreds of infernal images running about the rigging, though that must have been fancy, for I could see but one. At length the deep boom of a large gong from the very bowels of the ship put the finishing stroke to our courage, and with one accord the men rushed to the remaining boat, and lowering it alongside, began hastily pitching their traps aboard. The mate begged us to wait until we reached some other port, or at all events until the captain returned; but we would not listen to him. 'Hold on, boys!' he cried, as the last one entered the boat and began to bear off. 'If you are going, you might as well take me along, for I'm blessed if I stop on board alone for all India!'

"He was taken on board and the boat shoved off amid a howl of unearthly laughter from on board.

"Upon reaching the landing, we met the captain just preparing to come off. He did not seem much surprised at our desertion, but ordered us on board again at once. At this moment, a general exclamation from the crew caused me to turn my eyes toward the ship. A bright light was streaming from her cabin windows; another instant and the flames shot up from the hatchways, enveloping the masts, sails and rigging in one sheet of fire. In silence we gazed upon her, and I can almost swear I saw the form of the spectre enter a boat on the side of the ship farthest from us, and pull away into the darkness. She burned fiercely for about an hour, when, as the poet says:

"'She gave a heel to starboard, then to port,
And going down head-foremost, sunk—in short.'

And that was the last of the Gil Blas."

"Is that all?" asked Jack Brace, as Joe silently filled his pipe and began smoking.

"It's enough, aint it?"

"Yes—too much; but did you never find out anything more about the ship?"

"Never."

"What did people say about it?"

"'Fudge,' mostly."

Jack ruminated several minutes in silence.

"You say the ship was insured, and that she had a tremendous hard name?"

"Well, then," said Joe, "if you must know all about it, people did say it was a pretty smart game to bring a ghost all the way from Boston to put a scare on a whole ship's company; and if the captain and mate never had any practice of the kind before, they certainly did it well for a first attempt. The owners got their insurance, however, and it was the general opinion that they couldn't have got the old boat off their hands in any better way, all things considered. So now you've got the whole of the story and are at liberty to make the most of it."

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE LITTLE L KITCHEN:

—OR,—

A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE.

BY EMMA CARRA.

"How pleasant and cosy everything looks!" half whispered Mrs. Eustice, as she laid her baby in his willow cradle and spread his little bright, patchwork quilt over him and tucked it in at the sides; then leaning still lower, she touched her lips to his plump little cheek, while the long curls of the youthful mother swept forward, and for a moment hid the features of both. Rising, with all a mother's pride when she views her first-born, she whispered still louder, "O, I wish Edmund was here to see baby's curling little head all clinging, even in his sleep, to that rattle he brought him. Well, though I never praise him before any one, I can't help but feel proud of him, for he is the very image of Edmund. But why don't husband come to tea? why, it is ever so long past his usual time of being here." And Mrs. Eustice glanced around the room with an air of satisfaction.

Everything was scrupulously neat. The bright, new, cane-seated chairs sat gracefully against the wall, in which her skilful hands had covered, looked soft and inviting. The tea table was spread with glittering white ware, and the dishes which were filled with different kinds of food, were each covered with a snowy napkin, all in waiting for the loved one to come. The wind whistled and raved against the new sides of the young wife's little parlor kitchen, as if it would gain find an entrance; but Mrs. Eustice thought of the well filled coal bin in the cellar, and heeded it not; her only cares at present, was on account of her husband's absence. At length a footstep was heard near the outer door, and the wife sprang to open it, but ere her hand lifted the latch, it was quickly opened, not by the husband, but by Mrs. Crosby, the wife of a wealthier neighbor. Mrs. Eustice blushed rather deeply, but she soon recovered her self-possession, and inviting her visitor to enter, drew the large rocking-chair towards the fire and bade her be seated.

Mrs. Crosby, after commenting on the weather and giving a scrutinizing glance around the room, gathered the folds of her rustling brocade silk in her hands, sank back in the proffered chair rather abruptly with:

"Well, did you upholster this?"

"I did," said Ellen Eustice, with another blush, not knowing whether her guest was going to compliment her skill, or make sport of her attempts to make articles more comfortable in so cheap a way.

"I declare," continued the neighbor, "if my house depended on my skill for lounges and easy chairs, I guess it would be rather barren of furniture. I always think the time spent over such articles is lost, for they are only home-made after all, and you can buy new furniture so cheap."

Ellen's previous happy spirits all vanished now, and to conceal her depression she leaned over the cradle, and pretended to be busy covering over the baby. Mrs. Crosby did not intend to wound the feelings of her neighbor, nor did she think that anything she had said did do so, for she had never known what it was to lack for many things that would have been very acceptable to Mrs. Eustice.

"Come," continued she, with a light laugh, "don't fuss over that baby so. I guess when you have had half a dozen to see to as I have, you wont enjoy it so well—for my part, I am glad to get away from the little noisy things with their constant prattle. I always tell Joseph that there should never be any children in a house that does not contain twelve rooms at least, and plenty of money to support nurses and cooks. But come, I have called to have you go to the theatre to-night; Joseph purchased tickets for himself and us to-day, and told me to come over earlier to invite you, but that tormenting Bridget of mine, the nurse, had to up and go to the funeral of her cousin, so I had to spend the afternoon in the nursery—an occupation I detest."

The young mother arose from her stooping posture, and stood for a moment in silence, first looking into the face of her neighbor, and then at the little dimpled being in the cradle. A painful struggle seemed to be going on in her mind—she loved to go to the theatre, but she had no one to leave the baby with, and besides she thought that her husband would be very lonely to find her absent when she returned, so she said, while her face changed color a little:

"I am very much obliged to you and your husband, Mrs. Crosby, for your invitation, but I think I cannot go to-night. Mrs. Lace, or some other friend in the neighborhood, will be very happy, I know, to take my place and use the spare ticket."

"Cannot go! Well, that beats all! And pray tell us what is the reason?"

The youthful wife's eyes sank to the carpet, and at that moment she wished she or her neighbor was a thousand miles away; she did not like to offend Mrs. Crosby, as in many respects she was a kind neighbor, and had often done her many little favors, for which the mechanic's wife felt very grateful; but still the cutting remarks she almost always made when they met, were hard to bear without letting her visitor know how they injured her feelings. She now remembered that the day previous she had mentioned to Mrs. Crosby that she was fond of going to the theatre, and that she should like to see the play of "The Stranger," which was to be performed for several nights; and it was now plain to her that Mrs. Crosby had spoken to her husband concerning the conversation, and he had probably purchased the tickets for her especial gratification; so after a moment's pause she answered:

"Well, I will tell you the reason. You know Edmund works hard all day at the shop, seldom going anywhere away from home to enjoy himself, and when he comes home I am afraid he will think it hard to stay here alone all the evening with the baby."

"And is that all the excuse you can give?" exclaimed the neighbor, bursting into a loud fit of laughter. "Well, well, well, if every wife was as thoughtful as you are, what a delightful time of it our sex would have, staying at home taking care of babies and trying to keep their husbands good natured."

That isn't all," interrupted the other; "I began a piece of work to-day I wanted to finish."

"A shirt for Edmund, I suppose," returned Mrs. Crosby, looking archly into her face.

Mrs. Eustice gave no answer to her remark, but continued, "Edmund has not returned and you know I cannot leave the baby here alone."

"Well, now look here, Mrs. Eustice," said the visitor, playfully taking her hand, as she was passing to look out of the window to see if her husband was coming; "all your excuses amount to just nothing—I know you want to go to the theatre for you told me so, and I told Joseph, and then he bought the tickets; so now I shall be offended with you if you do not go. I should like to know if your husband is so much better than other men, that you must bury yourself here in this little one room and a bed-room, just to please him. Why, if you indulge him so now, he will make a perfect slave of you before you are many years older. You must set up for yourself and let him know you have a separate existence to maintain; so now just dress yourself and be ready in a jiffy, for it is getting late, and I will step back to the house and tell Fanny to come over and sit with the baby till his father comes."

Mrs. Eustice began to think she had confined herself at home too closely, for she seemed suddenly to recollect that she didn't see other women do so, and she argued if Edward loved her as she thought he did, he would like to have her attend places of amusement even if he didn't go, and she answered pleasantly: "Well, I will go."

"There," returned the other, "now I have some hopes of you. Let me tell you there are more agreeable ways of passing one's time, than sitting in the chimney-corner, tending babies and making shirts."

Mrs. Eustice smiled, and her neighbor arose and went to her home to procure one of her household to return and stay with the baby.

Now that the young wife had made up her mind to go, she determined that in dress she would not be outdone by her companion, so she re-arranged her curls in the most becoming style, and then arrayed herself in her wedding dress of rich brocade, with here and there various ornaments which she knew how to place to the best advantage. When all was completed, the youthful wife and mother still looked as lovely as on that morn when the young carpenter called her his bride. As she surveyed herself in the little mirror, she said mentally:

"Now if dear Edmund were only here before I go, and would say he wanted me to go even if he did not, I know I should feel better; but after all, as Mrs. Crosby says, what is the use of my burrying myself here, when I might enjoy myself so much more by going out?"

In a few moments the neighbor returned, accompanied by Fanny, and when she saw how beautiful Mrs. Eustice looked, "I declare," said she, "it would have been a sin for you to remain away, for when I returned home, I found another added to our party."

"Who is it?" inquired Ellen.

"O, never mind now, it is somebody that you don't know, though he knows you, for he saw you the other day in Benning's dry goods store, and asked your name of one of the clerks, and he saw you when you met me on Washington Street, and by that means found out you were an acquaintance of mine; so he called in this evening, and when I told him we were all going to the theatre, he asked if he might accompany us. Of course I couldn't say no, and besides he will not disgrace us, as he is almost one of the upper tens in point of money."

Mrs Eustice stood with her light little wisp of a bonnet on, but her shawl lay folded on the table. Stopping a moment she said:

"I don't believe I had better go—I thought there was to be nobody but you and your husband."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the neighbor; "if you aint the silliest little prude that ever I saw! I guess 'Gustus wont hurt you: I will see that he don't carry you off—come!" And Mrs. Crosby unfolded the shawl and threw it over her shoulders.

Ellen made no more objections, but bent gently over the cradle and kissed her babe, put a little more coal in the stove that Edmund's tea might be sure and keep warm, and with many words of caution what to do in case the baby waked, she went out.

"What a beautiful woman!" exclaimed Augustus Emmons to Mrs. Crosby, a few moments after his introduction to Ellen. "I declare her husband must be a happy fellow to own such a treasure."

"Well, he does seem to like her well enough, but he is nothing but a mechanic, working hard every day for just a living. I tell you he don't appreciate such a beautiful wife as you would, not by any means."

"I'll bet he don't," said Mr. Emmons. "I only wish I had seen her first—she shouldn't live in a house the size of the one you say she does; I think I should know how to value her."

This conversation was carried on in a low tone in an adjoining room and was not intended for Ellen's ear; but Mrs. Eustice, attracted by a picture on the wall, started to go and see it while her neighbor was attending to some trifling duty; it hung near the door of the room where Mrs. Crosby was engaged, and whither her friend followed her, and thus it was that Ellen heard what was said. Mrs. Eustice knew that they did not mean that she should hear, and so she thought them the more sincere. It is pleasant to be praised and called beautiful, especially by those who have ample chance to judge between beauty and the reverse. She thought, too, how easy Mr. Emmons was in his manners; and every part of his dress was so perfectly neat, and his hands when he took hold of hers at the introduction, seemed so soft and looked so white, she could not help contrasting him with Edmund, whose hands were callous and brown, and for whom, almost every day she had some garments to mend.

"O dear!" she sighed to herself, "I almost wish I had not married so young; I know I should have been happier if I had married a professional man, who could have supported me in better style;" then stepping back to the sofa, she again seated herself and waited their return.

In a short time the two couples were on their way to the theatre. Mr. Crosby gave his arm to his wife, and Ellen could do no less than walk by the side of Mr. Emmons, but she did not feel happy; she was thinking whether Fanny would keep the baby covered warm, and whether the fire would get low, so as not to keep the tea hot, and what Edmund would say when he found that she had gone to the theatre with Mrs. Crosby, for she knew that he did not like her very well, though he had never requested her not to go with her. They had not proceeded far before Mr. Eustice turned the corner of a street and met his wife face to face. His coat was buttoned up tight, and under his arm he carried a jack plane.

"Good evening, Edmund," said Ellen; and she felt as if she wanted to spring to his side and go home, but she thought it would not be treating her neighbor aright, so she remained where she was.

Mr. Eustice looked confused and said, "Why, Ellen, where are you going?"

"To the theatre," answered the wife; and before she could say anything more, Mrs. Crosby remarked that they must hurry on or they should be late. The husband and wife exchanged glances; his was full of wonder and disappointment—her expression was a mixture of regret that he had met them, and of pride that though she lived in so humble a manner, she could keep fashionable and wealthy society.

When Mrs. Eustice had got far from the spot where she met her husband she looked back and he was still standing there, but Mr. Emmons drew her attention by some pleasant observation, and soon they were all seated where gaslight and gilding kept all serious reflections at a distance; besides, Ellen's companions were so polite and attentive, especially Mr. Emmons, that they gave her no opportunity to regret her coming.

Edmund Eustice was the son of one who was early a widow, and poor, therefore his had always been a laborious life, though not to the neglect of his education; for he had toiled early and late that he might be master of his native tongue and acquire all the best branches pertaining to a life of industry. He was muscular and healthful, and as he grew older he seemed to prefer learning the carpenter's trade, and in this his mother encouraged him—believing in the maxim of the good Franklin: "He who hath a trade hath an estate." Mrs. Eustice lived to see her son master of his trade, and then bestowing her last blessing on him who had ever been so faithful in discharging the duties of a son, she closed her eyes on earth. From that time until Edmund found the amiable Ellen Amory he felt lonely, for he was fond of female society and mixed but little with his own sex save in business hours. He was no fop, but a plain-spoken, honest mechanic, using no words that did not come from the heart, and when he said to the beautiful and youthful Ellen, "I love you—will you be my wife?" he meant what he said; he made no fair promises, but that he would be industrious and do the best he could in future, and her silent answer filled him with stronger impulses to labor that he might one day possess a home worthy of her. He might have had more of this world's wealth, but while his mother lived his purse was ever loosened at her slightest wish, and then his education had not only cost him hours of hard study when his weary nerves needed rest, but he had spent much of his earnings; so that when he made Ellen his bride he was poor, but he felt no fears but that he could support her comforably or he would not have married her. It was two years since he called her wife, and thus far they had been years of joy—the young husband having no wish beyond his home.

The previous summer Mr. Eustice proposed to his wife that he should commence building a new house. "I am not able," said he, "to put up a large frame and finish off a house at once, but I should like to make a beginning and complete an L first, if you would be contented to live there during the winter. I will have a good sized kitchen, and a bed-room and closets off, and then as I get able, I will go on with the rest. I suppose we shall be rather crowded for room, but it will not be as though we were going to live so forever, and it will save paying rent besides. I can work on the inside work of the house evenings after supper, for I shall not mind working late when you are so near me, and we have the prospect of having a nice large house by-and-by."

"Begin your house as soon as you have a mind to, my dear," replied the wife; "as I do my own work, I can fix up our little kitchen like a parlor, and then I shall be so pleased with that little garden attached, if you intend to build on that lot you bargained for a few months ago."

Mr. Crosby's garden joined the one belonging to Mr. Eustice, and when Ellen was arranging plants, their wealthier neighbor often spoke to her, and by degrees they became better acquainted, until calls were exchanged; but as we have said, they were not always agreeable to Mr. Eustice, though he did not like to make enemies of his neighbors, and perhaps, too, there was a secret pride in numbering among their acquaintances the family of the wealthy merchant.

Mr. Eustice stood on the corner where Ellen left him, until distance and darkness hid her from his view and then he went slowly towards his house. When he arrived there, the outer door was wide open, and the inner one stood ajar; the wind had extinguished the light, while the babe lay screeching in the cradle, Can it be, thought he, that Ellen would leave the child alone, expecting I would be here soon? No, it cannot be, for that is so unlike her; but whoever promised to remain here has proved false to her trust, and with thoughts like these running through his mind he groped around the mantel for matches to relight his light, and in doing so, knocked a large glass lamp to the hearth and broke it in fragments; obtaining the matches and lighting another light, scarcely knowing what he did as he saw the stream of oil slowly winding its way from the painted floor-cloth to the woolen carpet, he caught the first article of cloth that came in his way, which proved to be the skirt of Ellen's choicest delaine dress. Mr. Eustice tossed it dripping with oil into the shed, but the cries of the babe so confused him he did not perceive what he had done.

When the husband had quieted the cries of the child, and wrapped whatever came handiest around its half chilled limbs he began to look around to see if his wife had left his supper in readiness; looking within the stove, he saw there was new coal within, but it was not kindled, the lower coals had all died out, the tea was cold, and on the table was nothing but plain bread and butter. Mr. Eustice would have kindled the fire, but if he should attempt to lay the babe in the cradle, its screams would force him to take it up immediately; so with only a scanty supper after a hard's day's work, he walked his little L room back and forth with the babe in his arms, until the clock struck twelve. How very differently had he spent the evening from what he thought he should when he left the shop with his plane under his arm, for it was his intention then, after taking tea with his wife, and chatting a little on what had transpired during the day, and perhaps playing with little Arthur, to work until pretty late in forwarding the inside work to his house. But now when he thought of her leaving her home without making any provision for his comfort, or procuring a proper substitute to take care of the baby, it caused him to feel nervous, and a severe headache set in.

Just as the clock struck twelve, he heard his wife's step outside, and as he lifted one corner of the curtain and looked out, he saw Mr. Emmons standing by her side, talking in a low tone. The husband threw back the curtain and gave the babe a toss into the cradle; his first impulse was to rush out and tell Mr. Emmons to begone, nor ever dare to accompany his wife to any place of amusement again; but a moment's reflection convinced him that he was too much excited then to act calmly, and he turned away and went into his chamber and quickly laid his head on the pillow, knowing that the cries of the child would soon bring his wife in, and they had the desired effect; for the door slowly opened and Ellen, with a flushed face, stepped quietly in. The young mother quickly appeased the cries of her babe, and then again preparing the cradle laid it between its blankets. And now she slowly unrobed and looked around the room, her heart almost sank within her, for she espied the fragments of the broken lamp, and following up the event, she learned the disastrous consequences. Inspecting the stove, she concluded that the coals she poured on did not kindle, and when she lifted the table cloth, she saw no tea had been turned into the cup she left, nor was much of the bread gone. She concluded that Edmund had gone home and found the fire out, dismissed Fanny, ate a luncheon principally of cake and pie, left the baby in the cradle and went to bed and had slept soundly ever since, leaving little Arthur to cry or sleep, as the case might be.

Ellen went to the bed to see if her husband was awake but he feigned sleep, so she returned and partly closing the door, threw herself into a chair and cried the first bitter tears she had shed since she became his wife. Edmund raised himself and looked through the crevice, and could hardly refrain from rushing out and soothing her; but then the thought that she should thus leave her home and go to the theatre with a stranger prevented him.

Ellen's tears somewhat relieved her; she took her babe in her arms and crept softly to her place of rest, but she could not sleep; there came up images before her of the sad face of the Stranger in his black hat and plumes, and his heart-broken wife separated from her children, and then came other pictures. She thought of what pleasant things Mr. Emmons had said to her, and when he left her he expressed a hope that this would not be the last time they should meet. She replied that she knew her husband would be happy to see him at their house any evening, and to this he made no answer, but asked when she would be at Mrs. Crosby's again. At this moment Mrs. Eustice heard Arthur cry, so she did not answer him, but hastily bade him good-night.

I wish Edmund could be as agreeable as Mr. Emmons, thought Ellen, and she shuddered to think she had drawn the comparison, so she took a different view. "He knows I am married, and ought not to have said many things he did say to me. Should I like to see Edmund waiting on a strange lady to a place of amusement, without saying anything to me? But I know he would not do so. O, dear! I am dreadful unhappy. I wish Edmund would wake up and talk to me," and she tossed sadly till she could remain silent no longer, so moving nearer to his side, she whispered softly in his ear, "Edmund, *Edmund!*" But no answer was returned, so she pressed her lips softly to his cheek, and resolved she would never go to any place of amusement again without her husband, and after this resolve her nerves became more quiet, and she soon sank into a troubled sleep; when she awoke her husband had arisen and gone. Although suffering from a severe headache, she crept away from her child and hastily robing herself, went about preparing breakfast and making things as orderly as before about the house. In a little while Mr. Eustice returned, but he ate his breakfast almost in silence. No allusion was made to the theatre, for Ellen saw that her husband's brow was clouded, and there was a choking sensation about her throat that prevented her from speaking. The dinner, too, was rather a silent one, but when the husband went out to his work, he leaned over the rocking-chair, where his wife sat with Arthur in her arms, and kissed them both. Ellen looked up and burst into tears, and as he turned away she tried to detain him, but he stooped and kissed her again saying, "Not now, darling, but this evening I will talk with you," and went out.

That evening when the sun went down, there was a bright fire glowing in Mrs. Eustice's stove, a nice supper was on the table, in the neatly furnished sitting-room or L kitchen, and best of all Ellen was there to enliven the whole. When the pleasant meal was ended, and the large and small rocking-chairs drawn near the fire, Mr. Eustice took his wife's hand and said:

"Ellen, don't you remember reading in one of the papers last spring, of a young woman coming here from the country, with a babe, in search of her husband, and after learning she had been betrayed into a false marriage, and that he would not acknowledge her as his wife, killed her babe and then herself?"

Ellen started and turned pale as she answered faintly, "I do."

"Your companion of last night," continued the husband, "was the father of that child; the seducer of an innocent girl; and what is more, Mrs. Crosby is not ignorant of this."

"I will associate with them no more," said Ellen, winding her arms around her husband's neck and burying her face in his bosom.

"Spoken like yourself, darling," returned Edmund; "I knew it would be right when all was known to you, and that is why I let the villain go free last night; but he must never dare to enter here or place himself in your way again."

Mutual explanation followed, and from that time all intimacy between the two families ceased; Mrs. Crosby seeming to feel a certain condemnation while in the company of the noble Ellen, who ever after was willing to remain away from places of amusement when he whom she loved could not accompany her.

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

HOPE.

"Spes est vates."

BY JAMES F. FITTS.

There is an angel hovering near the earth,
With snowy wings and joyous, speaking eyes;
He brings a charm to every social hearth,
And joy where'er he flies.

He takes possession of the souls of all,
And all acknowledge him a loving friend;
He's found in castle, cottage, hut or hall—
To each doth he attend.

Who knows him not? He strews our path with flowers—
His presence fills the earth with cheerful light;
A blest companion in our darker hours,
A friend in sorrow's night.

"Hope is a prophet!" In our hearts he lives—
Omnipotent and omnipresent, he;
To read the future unto us he gives,
And it through him we see.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE THIN COUPLE.

BY WILLIAM O. EATON.

JOHN LATH edged his way through the world, till, at the age of twenty-five, he felt able and willing to get married.

"I am not a stout man," said John to himself; "far from it. I have always been called one of the light weights, and sometimes I feel as if the light would shine through me. But I am stout in my pocket-book, which many fatter men cannot say. My breast is full enough to hold a soul, and if my body is not thick, my head can say the same. But what kind of a wife shall I get? nay, what kind of a wife *can* I get? My proportions may be impressive, but they are far from being imposing, and no woman could honestly stand up and swear that she would stand by me, 'through *thick* and thin!'"

John was a modest man, and sensible of his thinness, wished to choose a partner who would neither attract attention to his outlines, by undue contrast with her own, nor have a chance to sneer at him on that score. So he looked about him—and then went ahead and looked about him—and then went ahead again, until at last he fell in with Susan Rail, of about his own size and figure—a trifle thinner, if anything—and after he fell in, finding that they didn't fall out, after six months' courtship they became one flesh—that is to say, one skin and bone.

Conscious of the addition to their responsibilities, as the head of a prospective family, however thin, Mr. and Mrs. Lath resolved not to be poor as well as thin, and so labored hard to keep what property they had, and get more as fast as possible. Thin people are generally active workers, but John and Susan, being of the Edsonian, skeletonian school, were almost incredibly industrious. The consequence was, that they grew even thinner than before—mortification set in—they worried themselves into fits of discontent and dyspepsia, and finally began to think there was no such thing as happiness for them this side of the grave. Gloom predisposed them to wrangle.

"O, how thin I am *growing!*" sighed Mrs. Lath. ("Growing!" as if she had not always been thin!) "I think there will soon be little left of me."

"It's a fact, Susan, and I am in the same predicament. Look at me! I am scarcely three inches through," said her husband, sounding his back and breast.

"I wouldn't mind it so much, if it wasn't for what people say," added Mrs. Lath.

"Why, what do they say?"

"They say we are so mean, we work ourselves half to death, and so ill-natured, that we scold ourselves nearly all the rest of the way."

"I'm sure I don't wonder much at their opinion," said Lath, with a melancholy grin; "for when we walk out together, we must look like two scarecrows!"

"Speak for yourself, if you please, John Lath!" cried out his wife quickly—for he had touched her vanity. "I'm sure *I* never should have attracted attention, if I had married a man of reasonable thickness. *I* was always called a genteel figure."

"O, don't mind what I said. I didn't mean to anger you," rejoined John, coaxingly. "You're good enough for me, Sukey!" And he chucked her under the chin.

She twitched away. "They used to call me 'the little sylph,' and a great many good matches were proposed for me to marry, before *you* came along."

"It was lucky, then," said Mr. Lath, "that I came along as soon as I did; for if you had married a *match*, you'd have had a much thinner husband than I am, my dear. But now don't let us worry ourselves in this way any more, but see if we can't do something to remedy the evil. What do you think of hasty-pudding and milk, hey?"

This was business-like, and as Mrs. Lath saw that he was serious about the matter, she addressed herself to it in good earnest.

"Is that very nourishing?" she asked.

"They tell me that in Africa, when they wish to fatten up the candidate for a king's harem, they feed them entirely on mush and milk, for months before he comes along to purchase. I don't know what effect it would have on white folks."

Mrs. Lath, though fond of good eating, and a good deal of it, had grown so desperate under the jibes, real or supposed, of others, in regard to her spare figure, that she determined to sacrifice the pleasures of the table upon the altar of her peace of mind; and so, for five weeks, she tried the virtues of hasty-pudding and milk—both she and her husband making that dish their exclusive diet. At the end of that time, having become thoroughly nauseated, they weighed themselves, and Mrs. Lath was astonished to find that they had gained but an ounce apiece! She would have been still more astonished, had she known that her husband had slyly put a pound-weight into a part of her dress, and the same into one of his pockets, for in reality they had lost fifteen ounces, avoirdupois weight, each. They concluded that hasty-pudding and milk did not agree with them.

"African diet is a failure," said Lath, solemnly.

"And all that self-denial has gone for nothing," said Mrs. Lath. And she was about to put in practice her resolution to stuff herself with the best of everything for the next fortnight, when her husband deterred her.

"We might try the Russian plan," he suggested, thoughtfully.

"What is the way the Russians do? *They* are white folks," said Mrs. Lath.

"They eat a great deal of fat—swallow oil, chew candles, and all that sort of thing."

"Are they any fatter for it?"

"I guess it makes 'em pretty stout, else they couldn't stand the cold so well. Besides, you know what a stout resistance they made at Sebastopol!"

"Then let us try fat!" said Mrs. Lath, energetically.

They tried fat for one month, either in the form of meat, suet-puddings half-suet, fat soups, sausages, butter, sweet oil, or some other way, and slept in oiled sheets; but the weigh was still against them, and their *gross* weight nettled them not a little.

"All this trouble has been wasted!"

"But, my dear Susan, don't let us waste ourselves with trouble. I now remember the maxim—'Laugh and grow fat!'"

"That's very easy to say, but I should like to see anybody do it," said his hopeless spare rib.

"We might as well try. Come—let's be cheerful!"

"I don't know how," she murmured, despondingly.

"Let us leave off work and call it half a day," exclaimed he, affecting to be quite buoyant, "let us quit business and go into the country, snuff the fresh air, kiss the cows, feed the chickens, and pull the pigs' tails; and if we get tired of that, we will read all sorts of funny books, and laugh—ha, ha! ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you laughing at, John?"

"Nothing."

"What did you make that curious noise for, then?"

"O, I was laughing, not *at* anything, but beginning to *try* and be cheerful. Laugh yourself!"

"He, he, he!" snickered his wife, in such a feeble way that it made her husband laugh to see the effect; upon which she laughed at the absurdity of the thing, and in a short time they were both so merry, they forgot altogether they were thin.

They now packed up what they wanted for their jaunt into the country, with various works of humor, and set off for the new trial, as happy as two—grasshoppers. They repaired to a farmhouse, but unfortunately for their scheme, the farmer's wife was a fat woman, "fat as butter," and being rather coarse in her manners, she was a daily reminder, to them and everybody around, of their unhappy slenderness. But she meant nothing, good soul.

"I'm as big as a dozen of ye!" she would say, in a rich, unctuous voice, shaking her fat frame. "I don't think your victuals dew ye much good."

Roars of laughter would follow her sallies, for the contrast was too palpable not to be noticed; and while she was in their presence, they felt they could never grow fat—no matter how favorable other influences might be.

They did manage, however, out in the woods, where the slender trunks of the trees admitted of no uncomfortable comparison, to derive a great deal of cheerfulness from merry authors; and Mr. and Mrs. Lath have been heard to declare that to Washington Irving and Charles Dickens they are indebted for at least a pound of meat apiece.

However that may be, it is certain that they did not stay in the country long—probably owing to the fat farmer's wife—but repaired to the sea side, where they thought daily bathing might be of service to them.

"This is a nice sea-resort, aint it, Susan?" asked Mr. Lath, as they were dashing among the waves on the beach, with their life-preservers.

"Yes, and a *last* resort, too," she gurgled, with her throat nearly full of salt water. "If this don't do me, I am undone. I shall give up all hopes of being reasonably plump, till I become an angel in heaven."

"Now don't say so, my love," said Lath, like an amiable pike-staff to a drooping bean pole; "try to be buoyant—do as I do!"

He would have said more, but just then a great wave took him off his feet, and he fell head-first into the remorseless brine, sufficiently deep to prove that *he* was not so very buoyant, neither.

"Whough!" sputtered Lath, as he made the best of his way to the dry beach, in double-quick time—his terrified spouse following him, like the shadow of a pipe-stem. "I guess we wont bathe any more to day. Don't you think we've got enough?"

His wife, blue as indigo, said she thought they had, and a good deal too much; and as soon as the two skeletons got fairly warmed through again, at the hotel, they gravely agreed to return home at once and trust to Providence, and the ordinary course of things, to become physically more substantial.

They did so, and were delighted when they once more resumed their customary avocations and round of life; and having discovered, during their absence from home, that they liked nobody any better than themselves, and that few seemed really happier, no matter how fat they were, they gradually grew reconciled to thinness, and became less solicitous and sensitive upon the subject.

The consequence was that fortune smiled upon their philosophy, and gave them meat and clothing, for their bones; for sweet contentment and undivided love have so operated through their minds and hearts upon their bodies, that the thin couple have grown quite buxom to what they were before, and now cast a very respectable shadow behind them!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE STRANGE GAL.

BY STEEL PEN.

THE following anecdote may have appeared in print before, but never having seen it in that honorable dress, I take the liberty of thrusting it before the face and eyes of the mighty public:

The "lines" of Deacon M—— "had fallen in pleasant places." He was rich, he was pious, he was respected, he was everything else that is good. But even deacons are human, and human nature is never perfect. If the worthy gentleman had a failing, it was his pride of ancestry. Descended from that highly respectable family, the M——s, of some town or other on the classic soil—or rather sand—of Cape Cod, it gave him no little pleasure to refer to the fact upon all occasions, whether in season or out of season.

There was one circumstance, however, which occasioned our deacon no end of tribulation. Notwithstanding an uninterrupted, periodical line of daughters were born unto his house and heart, until his quiver was even more than satisfactorily filled, no male heir made his appearance to bless his sight and perpetuate his honored name—a deprivation which caused the good man and his family, in the words of that pious poet and Christian gentleman, Isaiah (I hope I am not guilty of an anachronism in calling Isaiah a Christian), to "roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves." "A judgment upon him," his neighbors said, "in consequence of his aristocratic family pride." But circumstances did not seem to bear them out in this particular, for at length and at last the red-faced nurse rushed into his anxious, doubting and expectant presence with the joyful words: "It's all right, and the child's a boy!" The deacon bowed his head in quiet gratitude.

A couple of years elapsed, and the women folks observed that, although the child grew stout and strong, increasing wonderfully in stature, he somehow didn't seem to "take notice" in an altogether satisfactory manner. They contrived to stave off any disagreeable reflections upon this point, however, by recalling the well known fact that precocious children seldom distinguish themselves as men. But other years rolled on, bringing little improvement; and when the deacon's son at length knocked at the gate of manhood, numbered 21, in life's muddy lane, the fact that he was an undoubted "natural" could no longer be disputed.

This was a sad blow to the deacon, after having his hopes so nearly fulfilled. Many and salt were the tears he shed, and many the prayers he offered up that another son might be given him, until as he himself grew older and older, to have prayed for *that* any longer would have been simply to solicit a private miracle. In this emergency a glorious idea occurred to him.

"If," he said to himself, "a man of my unclouded intellect chances to have a—a—in short a fool for a son, does not that very circumstance go to show that there is nothing impossible in the belief that my son, although a natural, is more than likely to have very smart children, if only by contrast?"

Full of this idea, the deacon broached the matter to his son, and urged upon him the duty he owed to his family and himself in the way of matrimony. To his sorrowful surprise, the son most decidedly objected, showing himself very shy of the fair sex. The deacon somewhat peremptorily insisted, a course of action which elicited from young hopeful a still more positive "I don't care—I do' want to—and I wont, so!"

The deacon persevered, explaining that, so far from there being anything disagreeable about matrimony, it was pre-eminently the reverse to any young flow of spirit. The youth shook his head doubtingly.

"Why, *I* married," continued the father, reproachfully. "*I* married, and have never had the slightest cause to repent it from that day to this. Indeed, it has been the source of a lifelong happiness."

"O well," responded the son, with a whimper and a sheepish look, "that's a very different sort of thing. *You* married *mother*, but if I marry, I've got to go and take a *strange gal!*"

Whether the deacon continued to urge the matter or no, I am unable to say, as I never inquired. It is hardly to be supposed, however, that any father, and more especially any deacon, could find it in his heart to compel his only son to sacrifice himself in such a fearful manner.

* * * * *

In opposition to the above, we give the following: Little Miss Fanny was the belle of the village. She was pretty, she was witty, she was young—and there is always something inexpressibly charming in youth. She had numberless suitors, of course; but she turned up the littlest bit of a pug nose at them all.

"Why, my dear Fanny," asked her mature and maiden aunt, "do you slight all your lovers in such a manner? You may see the time you will repent it."

"Why, aunt," responded pretty little Fanny, with a pretty little toss of her pretty little head, "you don't suppose I could ever love any of these fellows, so rough and common-place? No, aunt, I can never give my affections to any one who is not a perfect gentleman, rich, noble, high-spirited and handsome."

"Ah, Fanny! Fanny!" sighed her aunt, mournfully, "beware what you do! It was the very same feeling that made me the unhappy and lonely old maid I am."

"And you had lovers, too!" asked Fanny, with much interest.

"O yes, plenty of them; but I could not be satisfied. I wanted and expected perfection. Until I was twenty, I prayed, like yourself, for a husband who should be rich, noble, high-spirited, and romantic enough to understand and appreciate me, handsome and all that."

"Well," said Fanny, earnestly.

"Well," returned the aunt, "my prayer was not granted, and I made up my mind I was asking too much. I moderated my wishes, and from twenty to twenty-six, seven or eight—I forget which—I prayed for a husband, rich and respectable, although neither handsome, romantic nor young."

"And then!" said Fanny, drawing closer to her aunt.

"Why, from twenty-eight to thirty-five, I was more willing to receive what Providence might please to send, and I prayed merely for a helpmeet for me."

"And since then," asked Fanny, drawing still nearer, and laying her hand upon her aunt's arm, evidently much interested; "since then have you given up all hope?"

"No—not altogether—but almost," responded the maiden, nestling a little in her chair. "It's a very lonely life for a woman to be always alone, and of course I would like some kind of a husband. Having prayed for one all my life, it is scarcely to be supposed that I omit the request now; but my wishes are very humble, and my prayer short, though fervent and to the purpose. I merely say—"

"What?" grasped Fanny.

"Good Lord—*anything!*"

HOW THE DOCTOR WAS DINED.

We know a story—an "ow're true tale"—about the way a friend had the tooth-ache cured, and how the dentist got a good dinner, which is a little too rich not to see the light. So we shall here attempt to tell it.

Well, then, our friend had a bad tooth that troubled him (as most bad things in people's heads are apt to do), and after several days and nights of suffering from it, he courageously resolved to have the "offending member" taken out—to make a vacuum in the rows of his fine white ivories. The pain would, of course, be some; the loss of a "grinder" considerable. But out it must and should come. "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out," saith the good book, and our friend, doubtless, deemed one tooth out of thirty-two in number of less importance than one eye from two, both as to *looks* and convenience, and remembering the injunction in the above quotation, straightway started for the office of Dr. S——, to have his tooth extracted.

He walked boldly up to the door and rang the hall bell. There might have been something of nervousness in the pull of the knob; but we wont say there was. The bell jingled very distinctly, and in a moment our friend with toothache was ushered into the presence of the dentist, who was busy in spreading out and arranging his implements of art. These presented a formidable array! Here and there lay saws, files, knives, forceps, and all sorts of instruments for cutting and pulling.

The sufferer gave them a hasty glance, before he and the dentist had even time for salutation. But hasty as was that glance, it was enough! The toothache was no more.

"Good morning, Mr. M——. I'm glad to see you," said the doctor. "Take a seat, sir."

"Thank you—thank you, doctor," said the visitor, rather confusedly. But recovering himself with excellent grace, continued: "As I was passing, doctor, it occurred to me that I have a fine turkey for dinner to-morrow, and with another friend or two with you, should like to have a glass of good old wine over it. That's all, doctor. Shall I have the pleasure of your company to-morrow?"

"Certainly, my dear sir, and thanks. I'll call without fail. You may rely upon me."

"Well, doctor, I'm in a hurry. Only stepped in to see you and make the invitation. Good day, doctor."

"Good day, Mr. H——. I'll not forget your fine turkey and good old wine—depend upon it. Good day, sir."

And the man who had had the toothache quietly departed.

The dinner came off. It was indeed excellent, as we know—having been present on the occasion. The story as we relate it was told. The dentist's pain extractors were highly commended; while his health and that of the host went down with sundry bumpers of good old wine.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

LADY POLITICIANS IN RUSSIA.

A lady, the daughter of an old general named B., was one evening at the masquerade; she intrigued a person of very high rank, and while doing so, was imprudent enough to touch upon your forbidden subject: shortly after, she left the assembly and returned home, perfectly unconscious that orders had been given not to let her out of sight until her name and place of residence had been ascertained. The next morning, she was disagreeably surprised from an officer of the secret police, who politely requested her to accompany him to Count Orloff's office. Such an invitation was of course not to be refused—she went immediately. The gentleman who received her was *amiabilitie* itself; he kindly pointed to a seat that stood ready, and blandly proceeded to ask her a few questions concerning the previous evening's amusement, to all of which the mystified lady tremblingly replied "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," for no equivocation would have availed her in that place. When the interrogation was finished, the chair suddenly sank through the floor, and I am ashamed to say, that from the hand of some unseen person below, she received a correction such as little boys used formerly to be subjected to from the birch of old-fashioned schoolmasters. I met this lady frequently in company, and knew her sister well. I had the anecdote from an intimate friend of the family, and have not the slightest doubt of its being true.—*The Englishman in Russia.*

SERIOUS BUSINESS.

Dr. Magio relates that an idiot in the hospital of Salzburg, appearing to be singularly insusceptible of fear, an experiment of an appalling character and appalling consequences, was made upon him as a means of putting his susceptibility to a test. It was proposed to produce to him the impression that he was with a dead man come to life. A person, accordingly, had himself laid out as a corpse, and enveloped in a shroud, and the idiot was ordered to watch over the dead. The idiot perceiving some motion in the corpse, desired it to lie still; and the pretended corpse raising itself in spite of this admonition, the idiot seized a hatchet, which, unluckily, was within his reach, and cut off first one of the feet of the unfortunate counterfeit, and then, unmoved by his cries, cut off the other. He then calmly resumed his station by the real corpse.—*New England Farmer.*

A VILLAGE OF WOMEN.

The village of Medana, which is about sixty English miles from Ratschuld, in Wallachia, offers at the present moment a curious ethnographical singularity, having been inhabited by women only for the last thirty years. At one period this female population was two hundred. The ladies did not live like warriors, like the Amazons of old; but avoiding all intercourse with men, drove away from their territories all who appeared with matrimonial intentions. The anti-social settlement is now supposed to be on the decline; at least, no more recruits are made from the disappointed or love-crossed, and the members of the population are rapidly decreasing.—*German paper.*

Jester's Picnic.

A young Parisian, possessing more conceit than brains, had travelled so far as the borders of the British Channel; having accomplished this feat he was desirous of carrying away with him some souvenir of his temerity. Accordingly one fine morning he strolled down to the shore; taking a small bottle from his pocket he plunged it into the chosen waters of the channel and carefully corked it. A fisherman who had been an amused observer of the scene called out to our Parisian: "Why, sir, what are you doing? Don't you know that the tide is low at this hour, and when it rises your bottle will burst?"

"That's true," exclaimed the Parisian, struck with the justice of the remark. He forthwith proceeded to empty out half the contents of the vial, which being done, he replaced the precious relic in his pocket, and thanking the fisherman with a friendly nod, he walked gravely back to his hotel.

Jeu d'Esprit.—We find in the National Intelligencer, as having been written by Branta Mayer, Esq. (a gentleman well known in this city), on finishing the perusal of Doctor Kane's interesting account of his Exploring Expedition:

From the dawn of creation the name of old Cain
Has been cursed as the author of slaying;
But glory awaits in our age on the *Kane*
Who slays not, though famous for *slaying*.
So fill up the cup to the *Kane* of the *Pole*,
Whose marvellous tale, though no fable,
Attests that for generous deeds of renown
Our *Kane* is reality's *Able*.

"What's the matter, Uncle Jerry?" said Mr. ——, an old Jeremiah K. was passing by, growling most ferociously.

"Matter!" said the old man; "I've been luggin' water all the mornin' for Dr. C.'s wife to wash with, and what d'ye s'pose I got for it?"

"About ninepence."

"Ninepence! She told me that the doctor would pull a tooth for me some time!"

FASHION, 1854-6.

Time was when girls their bonnets wore
Projecting half a yard before;
When beauty was thus hidden deep,
'Twas something e'en to get a peep;
But now—O woman's freak mind!—
They wear their bonnets all behind;
While men their features hide with hair,
The ladies go with faces bare,
And fancy all admire who stare!
So this will pass in history's page
As English women's bare faced age.

Admiral Lee, when only a post captain, being on board his ship one very rainy and stormy night, the officer of the watch came down to his cabin and cried, "Sir, the sheet anchor is coming home."

"Indeed," says the captain, "I think the sheet anchor is perfectly in the right of it. I don't know what would stay out such a stormy night as this."

"Samuel, my darling, my darling little sonny," says the aged mother, "I've not seen your look for several days or more—where is it?"

"I know where it is."

"Well, where?"

"Why it's only lost a little—kinder—in the barn, or round out of doors, summers, I guess; perhaps up garret, or shied the wood-pile."

"This is a most excellent shrimp," said a guest to his host one day at dinner; "pray, what is the name of our purveyor?"

"Aldrich," replied the host.

"Any relation to the Spectator?"

"Guess so, for I often see steel by his side," replied the host.

"Can you give me two halves for a dollar?" inquired a loafer at a retail store.

"Certainly, sir," said the accommodating clerk, placing the two halves on the counter.

"To morrow I'll hand you a dollar," said the loafer, as he pocketed the halves.

Maxims for General Circulation.—National vanity is but personal vanity magnified many million times.—The hasty man only drinks his tea with his fork.—The man who has been kicked fancies everybody's leg is raised against him.—Laugh at no man for his pugnose—you never can tell what may turn up.

"What is a rebus?" innocently asked a lovely miss of a black-eyed lad.

Imprinting a kiss on her breathing lips, he replied: "If you now will return the compliment that will be a rebus!"

She was satisfied with the information.

Winchell, the humorist, tells a story of a dog, who undertook to jump across a well in two jumps. There are a great many people just like that dog—folks who think they can jump across a well in two jumps. They that undertake it, usually "bring up" down in the water.

A Doubtful Delicacy.—A "Cook and Confectioner," in the Morning Herald, advertises "invalid Turtle of the purest quality." Invalid turtle? What would be thought of invalid beef or mutton? No, no; whatever we eat—fish, flesh or foul—at any rate let it be healthy.—*Punch.*

A recent traveller in America records the following anecdote: "Jack," said a man to a lad just entering his teens, "your father's drowned."

"Darn it," replied the young hopeful, "and he's got my knife in his pocket!"

We read in a Sheffield paper, that the "last polish to a piece of cutlery is given by the hand of a woman." The same may be said of human cutlery, that "the last polish to the young blade is given by the mixing with female society."

Mrs. Smithers has a great idea of her husband's military prowess. "For two years," she says, "he was a lieutenant in the home matters, after which he was promoted to a captaincy in a regular company of cupboards and minces."

A business card in a daily contemporary, embellished by the cut of a whale, *open-mouthed*. Invites able-bodied young men to the whaling service. It certainly presents a good *opening* for the enterprising youth of the land.

A sailor being asked how he liked his bride, is reported to have remarked: "Why, d'ye see, I took her for to be only half of me, as the parson says, but dash me, if she isn't twice as much as I. I'm only a man—she's a tar-tar.

Gamboge, highly interested in a debate, asked me M. C. if he had *spouted*. "No!" replied the indignant beer-able, "I got what money I want of the sergeant at arms, without resorting to pawn brokers."

A sea horse is a *sea* horse
When you *see* him in the *sea*:
But when you *see* him in the *bay*,
A bay horse then is he.

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